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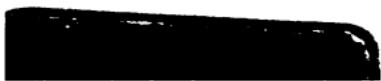
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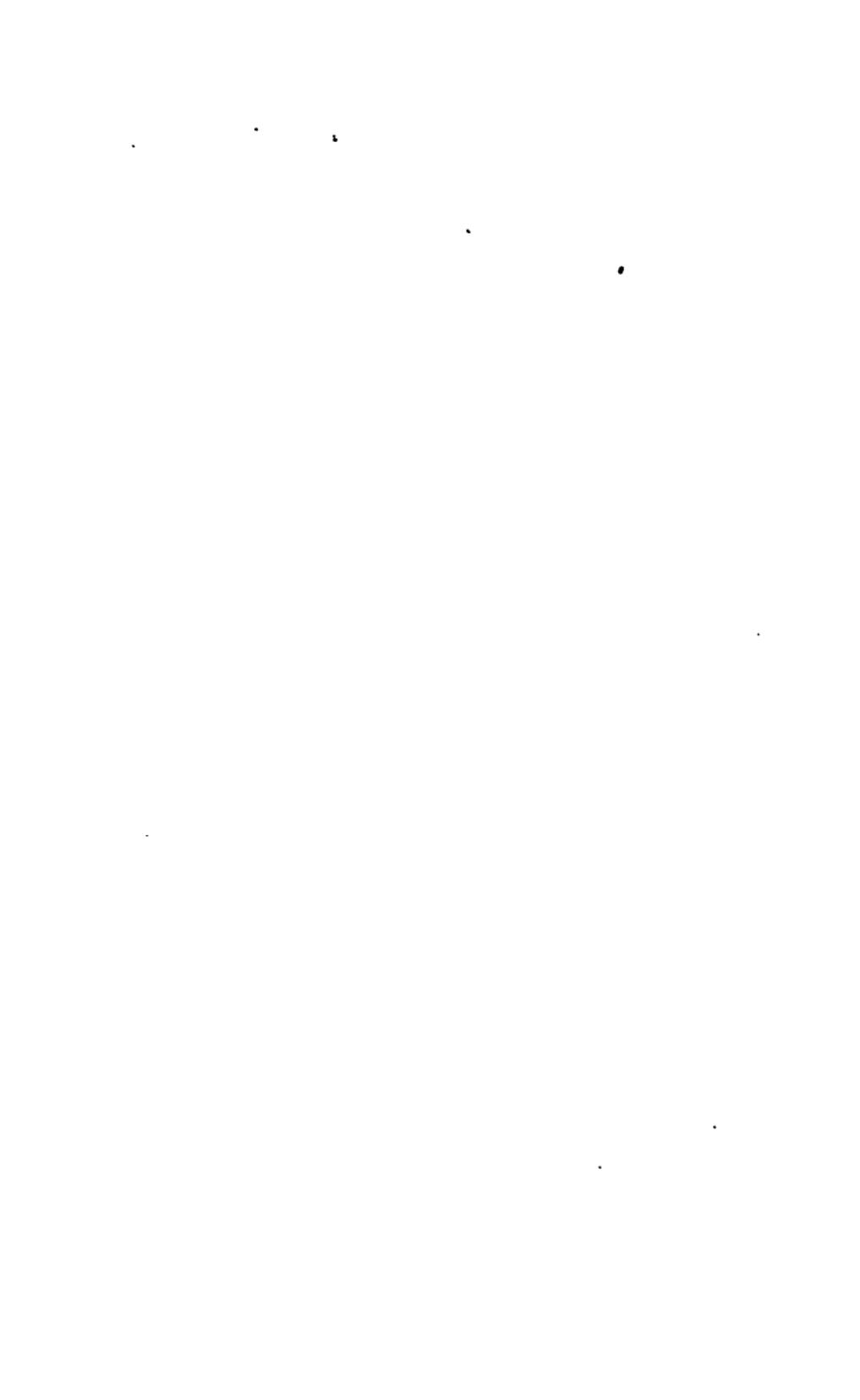
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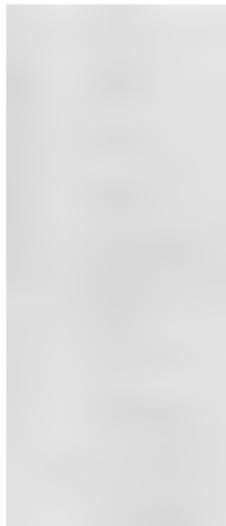
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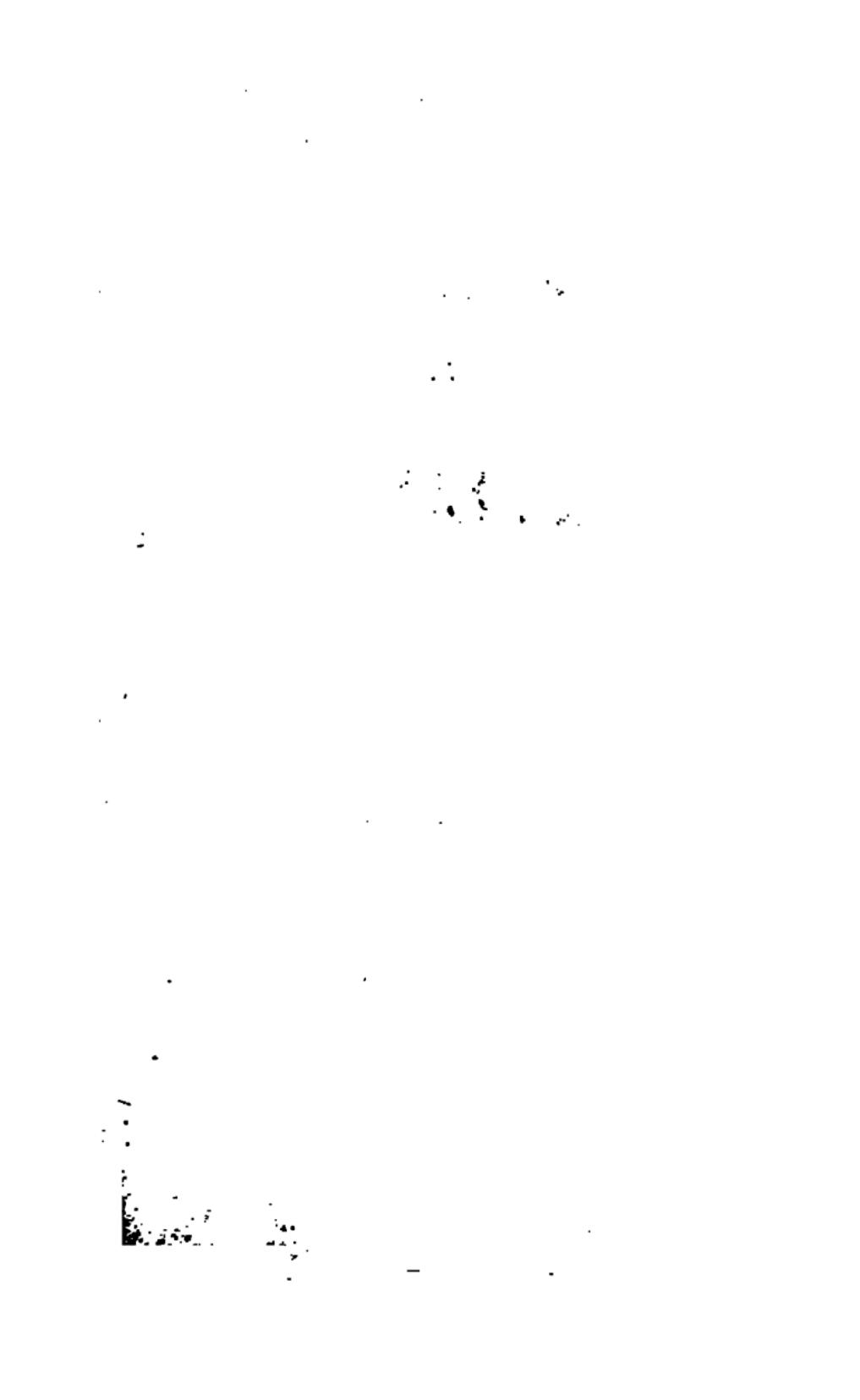








1780



THE
HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE.

As contained in the Sacred Scriptures of
The Old and New Testaments.

ATTEMPTED IN EASY VERSE.
With OCCASIONAL NOTES.

INCLUDING
A concise Relation of the Sacred History from the Birth of Creation to the
Times of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, and his Apostles.

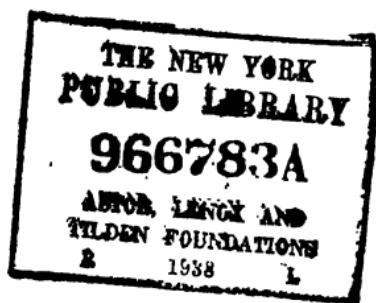
AND COMPREHENDING
All the memorable Transactions, during the Space of above 4000 Years.

In FOUR VOLUMES.

By JOHN FELLOWES,
AUTHOR OF GRACE TRIUMPHANT. A Poem.

VOL. IV.

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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE.
BOOK VIII.

FROM THE
Babylonish Captivity, to the Birth of
CHRIST:
CONTAINING
The Transactions of about 600 Years.

VOL. IV.

B



HISTORY THE FIRST.

The Grandeur and Magnificence of the City of Babylon, and the King's forgotten Dream interpreted by the Prophet Daniel.

Daniel, ch. i. ii.

WHEN Judah's sons, in captive chains,
 Were taken from their native plains ;
 And by the cruel king's command
 Left all their cities and their land ;
 To Babylon the nation goes,
 Whose walls and towers sublimely rose,
 This city early rose to fame,
 And from great Babel took its name,
 By Nimrod built. But had of late
 Gain'd great increase in strength and state.
 'Twas a vast square of wide extent,
 Prodigious walls around it went ;

4 HISTOR Y of the B I B L E.

Their stately height o'erlook'd the plain,
And armies no access could gain.
Strong warlike towers in order stand,
And the adjacent coast command :
Full sixty miles the walls were found
In vast circumference, moated round,
And rising sixty fathoms high,
They cloud the horizontal sky.
Full ninety feet their thickness was ;
And through an hundred gates of brass,
The prancing steed, and thundering car,
With mighty armies, rush'd to war.
Within vast palaces, and towers,
And temples ; all the mighty powers
Of sovereign greatness brightly shone :
While two great empires,* join'd in one,
Gave strength and glory to the throne.

Through

* About the eighteenth year of the reign of Manasseh,
Esarhaddon, son of Sennacherib king of Assyria, taking
advantage of the confusion consequent on an interregnum at
Babylon,

HISTOR Y of the B I B L E. 5

Through the high walls, with rapid stream,
The great Euphrates roaring came;
Between the towers he rolls his tides,
And the vast town his stream divides:
While by his wars the monarch tries
The wonderous place to populize;
And here, in captive chains, he brings
The conquer'd nations, and their kings.

Before their city was destroy'd,
Full eighteen years, the monarch's pride
The flower of Judah's sons constrain'd
By force to leave their native land;
And numerous youth of royal line
In the unpleasing journey join.
To Babylon they all were brought,
The learning of the Chaldeans taught,
And train'd in servile pomp to wait
Upon the monarch's regal state.

Conspicuous

Babylon, seized the government, and united the Babylonish
and Assyrian empires.

6 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Conspicuous in the princely band
Daniel and his companions stand :
These royal captives still abode
True to the worship of their GOD ;
In the king's feasts they would not join,
And scorn'd to touch the ruddy wine.
But they their learning swift attain'd,
And the vast height of science gain'd :
Healthful and vigorous, fresh and fair,
They stood in beauty past compare.

Nebuchadnezzar fill'd the throne,
And with increasing greatness shone :
The city still he beautified,
And stood exalted in his pride.

When night's deep shade had chas'd the day,
As on his bed the monarch lay,
A wonderous dream employ'd his thought,
And great surprize and terror brought.
He woke : it vanish'd into wind :
Not the least trace was left behind.

The

HISTOR Y of the B I B L E.

7

The troubled monarch gives command
To all the wise men of the land,
To tell the vision to the throne,
And make the interpretation known.
The augur deep and learned bard,
Alike confess the task too hard :
All science useless they proclaim,
Except the monarch tell his dream.
The king, impatient of delay,
To pride, and rising rage gave way ;
And in a stern determin'd strain
Commands the wise men to be slain.
But Daniel strives to interpose ;
And to the God of Israel goes.
The God soon makes the secret known :
Daniel reveals it at the throne.
And fresh before the wondering king,
His words the fleeting vision bring.
A statue stood before his sight,
Dreadful in form, and polish'd bright,

Of

8 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Of various metals form'd. A stone
Was suddenly against it thrown ;
Shatter'd to pieces soon it flew.
The stone to vast dimensions grew,
And fill'd the earth. Thus God makes known
His vast designs from heaven's high throne,
And sets before the monarch's eyes
How mighty empires fall and rise ;
Till heaven's high king shall seize the sway,
And make the wondering world obey ;
Eternal ages wear the crown,
And put all other empires down.

The vision thus the youth explain'd,
And highest reputation gain'd.
The wondering king, with vast surprize,
Before his captive prostrate lies.
Of more than mortal birth regards,
Gives him high honours and rewards,
And raises him to high command
Above the wise men of the land.

Then

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 9

Then to the king the youth commands
His three companions and his friends ;
And the young men that Daniel prais'd,
Were to high seats of honour rais'd.

HISTORY THE SECOND.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Daniel's Companions, having refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image, are cast into a Furnace of Fire, but miraculously preserved.

Daniel, ch. iii.

NOW by smooth Cebar's rolling stream,
The word of God expressly came
To a young man of Aaron's race,
Ezekiel nam'd. Full in his face
God's glory shone, and fill'd with awe
He various mystic visions saw ;

Vol. IV.

C

And

10 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

And his prophetic strains relate
Jerusalem's approaching fate :
This from his mouth the nation learns,
Seven years before the city burns.

Jerusalem in ruins laid,
And all the nation captive made ;
The mighty monarch rose in pride,
In power and grandeur, and apply'd
His towering thoughts in vast designs ;
And bright his seat of empire shines..

The haughty tyrant then proceeds
To the most impious, cruel deeds.
He a prodigious statue * rais'd,
And bright in burnish'd gold it blaz'd ;
Tall as an obelisk appear'd ;
And soon an herald's voice was heard,
Bearing the monarch's stern command
To every corner of the land,

Injoi

* This golden image was made about a year after
destruction of Jerusalem.

Injoining all both bond and free,
Whate'er his land, or language be,
To Dura's plain to take their way,
And there attend the solemn day
Of dedication. With this aim
The princes and the nobles came,
And all who wore the monarch's chain ;
In haste the place appointed gain,
And nations fill the crowded plain.

{

High in the air the image stands,
In prospect to the adjacent lands ;
Amongst the clouds its head displays,
And casts around a beamy blaze ;
The wonder of the world remains,
And like a tower o'erlooks the plains.
The heralds then aloud proclaim
In Babel's mighty monarch's name,
To all the nations that appear
At his command assembled there,

12 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

That when they hear the music sound,
They all fall prostrate to the ground,
And worship his Colossus. They
Who this command shall disobey,
And dare to rouse a monarch's ire,
Shall perish by devouring fire.

To please the king, the nations all
Before the wonderous image fall,
And while the abject tribes adore,
The music sounds, and trumpets roar,

But three bold youths of Judah's line
Against the king's commandment join;
Daniel's companions they appear,
But the young prophet was not there,
No idol gods they can allow,
Nor will they to the image bow.

The envious princes at the throne,
Make the young mens refusal known:
The frowning king in wrath commands,
And each bold youth before him stands.

And

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 13

And is it true, the monarch cry'd,
Swelling at once with rage and pride,
That despicable captive Jews
Our sovereign command refuse !
Dare you against my will appear !
And scorn the god that I revere !
Correct your pride ! your folly learn,
And to your duty quick return.
If at the solemn music's call,
You prostrate on your faces fall ;
And worship in the open space,
Belus great founder of our race ;
I am your friend. But mark me well !
If you against my law rebel ;
If you to stand it out intend,
And still remain too stiff to bend ;
The vengeance of a king will fall,
And burn like fire against you all :
The fiery furnace' raging flame,
Perhaps may teach you to be tame :

16 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

The fierce devouring fires grow tame,
And harmless rolls the ruddy flame:
The youths unhurt, amidst the blaze
Exulting sing JEHOVAH's praise.

The haughty monarch in his pride
Comes to the flaming furnace side,
To see the raging fires fulfil
The cruel dictates of his will:
But stands astonish'd, when he sees
The pious youths enjoy the breeze;
And safe amidst the flames remain,
Which had his mighty warriors slain.
And what demands his wonder more,
Instead of three he counted four!
With looks aghast, and wild surprize,
He thus to all his nobles cries:
Hear, all ye princes! did not we,
Conformable to my decree,
Cast three young men into the flame,
Which from the land of Israel came!

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 17

Fast were they bound ; but look ye there,
Four beauteous youths unhurt appear ;
Walk unconcern'd amidst the blaze,
And sing the GOD of Israel's praise !
The fourth is glorious in my eyes,
As some bright native of the skies.
Then, while the burning furnace blaz'd,
His lofty voice the monarch rais'd :
Shadrach and Meshach, hear my voice !
And Abednego ! ye whose choice
Hath been your fathers GOD to serve,
And highest honours thence deserve ;
For justly you revere his name,
Who can deliver from the flame :
Come forth ! our royal favour gain,
And stand the wonder of our reign.
The noble youths the call obey,
And from the furnace take their way ;
Elate and vigorous they spring,
And stand before the wondering king.

18 HISTOR Y of the B I B L E.

They fresh and fair unhurt remain,
Nor had they known the sense of pain ;

Unsing'd their bodies and attire,

Nor did they bear the smell of fire.

The astonish'd princes round them crowd,

And wondering nations praise aloud

The **GOD** who such deliverance gave,

Who from devouring fire can save.

Then spake the king : Ye nations, hear

My fix'd decree, and all revere !

Bless'd be the **GOD** whose mighty power

Appear'd in the distressful hour,

And sav'd from the devouring flame

The men that trusted in his name.

And let the **GOD** that thus appear'd,

By every nation be rever'd !

The wretch that henceforth dare despise

The **GOD** of Israel, surely dies.

Amongst our gods not one, or all

On whom in our distress we call,

Or

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 19

feign to rule the land or wave,
able in this way to save.

HISTORY THE THIRD.

Nebuchadnezzar humbled,

Daniel, ch. iv.

[O every land beneath the skies
Thus Babylon's great monarch cries :
at all that dwell beneath the sun
egard the wonders God hath done.
e God of all, who from his throne
ill make his truth and justice known :
ast are the wonders of his hands ;
rough every age his kingdom stands.
Having concluded mighty wars,
nd settled empire's great affairs ;
dorn'd my city, and my throne,
with surpassing glory shone :

D 2

And

20 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

And setting now my heart at ease,
I in my palace spent my days.
But in the watches of the night
A vision stood before my sight,
Which gave me pain. At my command
The learned men before me stand,
In deep prophetic arts approv'd ;
But none my dread suspence remov'd.
At length before me Daniel came,
Whom now we Belteshazzar name ;
And thus to him I told my dream.
A tall strait tree appear'd in view,
At which I wonder'd as it grew ;
Stately and strong its branches rise,
Which spreading cover'd all the skies :
Green were the leaves, the fruit was good,
And food for all the earth it stood :
The birds its boughs their dwelling made,
And cattle lodg'd beneath the shade.



But

But soon, descending on a cloud,
An angel came, and cry'd aloud :
Let the sharp ax the tree surround,
And bring it headlong to the ground :
The branches lop ; tear off the leaves ;
Scatter the fruit ; no more it gives
The fowls a shelter : let them fly,
And beasts no more beneath it lie.

But let the stump seven years remain
Amongst the grass and tender grain
With iron bound, and then again
Twill bud and sprout. This is the dream
Which as I slept before me came ;
I woke : it vanish'd from my sight,
Immediate mixing with the night.

Now Belteshazzar, since high heaven
The knowledge of these things hath given
To thee, relieve the anxious throne,
And make the hidden meaning known.

{

For

22 HISTOR Y of the B I B L E.

For all the wise men of our land

To the great task unequal stand.

Thee the high Gods the gift allow ;

Their servant, and their favourite thou !

Surpriz'd and griev'd the youth appear'd

When thus the wonderous dream he heard :

To speak he seem'd without the power,

And stood astonish'd for an hour,

Let not the dream, young man, I said,

Give thee surprize, or fill with dread :

But let me know. The youth replies,

While the big tear stands in his eyes,

The dream, O king, be to thy foes,

And let the meaning fall on those

That hate thy reign. The tree whose height

In vision thus employ'd thy sight,

That spread so wide, and seem'd so fair,

To which the birds and beasts repair,

Is thou thyself. The God of heaven

To thee hath lofty empire given :

Thee

Thee various distant realms obey,
And o'er the earth extends thy sway.
But as thou heard'st the angel call,
Hew down the tree, and let it fall,
Cut off the branches, strip the leaves,
And scatter wide the fruit it gives :
But let the stump in earth remain,
Amongst the grass and tender grain ;
Beaten with rain, and wet with dew,
Till Sol seven times the spring renew :
Hence learn, 'tis the decree of heaven
That thou shalt from thy throne be driven,
With the brute beasts to spend thy days,
And like an ox amongst them graze.
But as thou saw'st the stump remain,
Thou shalt assume thy throne again ;
Again with regal glory shine ;
And mighty empire shall be thine.
Then shalt thou know, that in the eye
Of Heaven's Supreme all kingdoms lie,

24 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

That he bestows each mortal crown,
Lifts up vain man, or casts him down,
Hence, mighty king, let wisdom's ray,
Direct the remnant of thy day :
And while the dreadful stroke delays,
Repent of all thy evil ways.
So spake the youth. Surpriz'd I heard,
And some small time the judgment fear'd :
But dazzling pomp and boundless power
Swell'd my vain heart; and every hour
The servile crowd my praises spread,
And neither earth nor heaven I dread.

The year's full circle round was brought,
And of my dream no more I thought.
But as from my vast palace height
My eyes were feasted with the sight
Of my strong walls and stately towers,
My statues, temples, and the powers
Of sovereign greatness: While the sun
Around me in full glory shone,

I felt my heart with rapture swell,
And from my lips these accents fell :
Where is the monarch fills a throne
Which shines like that of Babylon !
What mighty walls ! what strength, what height,
What wonders burst upon my sight !
What grandeur every part displays !
How in the sun the turrets blaze !
See how the marble columns shine !
What majesty and glory mine !
Behold my seat of empire rise
Imperial ! awful in all eyes !
I built the wonders which I see ;
What king, or god can equal me !
These haughty words I scarce had spoke,
When o'er my head the thunder broke ;
And from the sky this language came,
Which like a tempest shook my frame :
Yes, haughty wretch ! thou soon shalt know
That there's a God can lay thee low :

26 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

On thee he'll make his anger known ;
Driven from thy palace and thy throne,
Thou with the beasts shalt take thy lot ;
Thy wisdom, and thy works forgot.

No sooner these dire sounds had ceas'd,
Than I conceal myself a beast ;
Instant I thought I went on four,
Huge horns and shaggy ears I wore ;
And, like the father of the herd,
Grass to all dainties now prefer'd :
An hideous bull-like roar I rais'd,
Which shook the palace walls. Amaz'd
My servants came, and wildly star'd :
To come within my reach they fear'd.
With gathering force I roar'd more loud,
And ran amongst the wondering crowd.
With strange amaze my subjects view'd,
And to the fields my steps pursu'd.
The frightened cattle on me gaze,
And for a while forgot to graze.

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 27

I roar more loud: and swift they ran
From such a monster of a man.

Seven years I in the fields remain'd,
And sense of what I was retain'd;
But lost to each aspiring thought,
Amongst the beasts my food I sought:
Beaten with rain, and wet with dew,
My hair like eagles feathers grew:
My nails like claws of fowls. At last
Up to the heavens my eyes I cast,
Then upright walk: my errors learn,
And my lost faculties return:
I reason'd clear, and now I prais'd
The GOD whose splendors round me blaz'd,
Who over wide creation reigns;
Through every age his throne remains.

Then soon my former throne I gain'd,*
My nobles own'd me, and I reign'd

* The restoration of Nebuchadnezzar, after his seven years distraction, was one year before his death.

28 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

My wide-extended kingdom o'er,
And stood majestic as before,
Then all ye powers that own my sway,
The righteous GOD of heaven obey ;
Whose hand these wonderous works displays.
Holy and just are all his ways !
And he knows how, in dust to hide ;
Or humble the bold sons of pride.

HISTORY THE FOURTH.

*Belshazzar's impious Feast ; and Babylon taken
by Cyrus.*

Daniel, ch. v.

NEAR seventy circling years were fled,
Since Judah's sons were captive led,
And Zion's towers in dust remain'd,
While five * great kings successive reign'd.

The

* The kings that reigned at Babylon during the captivity
of Judah, were, 1. Nebuchadnezzar ; 2. Evilmerodach ;

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 29

The grandson of the king that laid
Jerusalem in ruins, sway'd
The sceptre of great Babylon,
Till Cyrus pull'd him from his throne.

This prince, who high renown demands,
Both to the crown related stands
Of Media and of Persia. He
Was chose by Israel's God's decree,
His drooping captives to restore,
And Zion's towers to raise once more.
To all the toils of battle bred,
His hardy youth in camps he led ;
Hereby he rose to matchless fame,
And wars first honours were his claim.
Vast realms he in subjection lays,
While Asia's plains around him blaze :
Great cities sack'd, and battles won ;
He now besieges Babylon.

Their

3. Neriglissar; 4. Laboroscarchod; and 5. Belshazzar.
Nebuchadnezzar reign'd 37 years after the captivity, and
Belshazzar 17; the rest of the reigns were very short.

50 HISTOR Y of the B I B L E.

Their armies in the open field
His warlike force had made to yield ;
And now, pent up within their walls,
He on the royal city falls.

Two years his lines the towers surround,
And yet he gains but little ground.
Such mighty walls the town inclose,
The idle monarch mocks his foes.
Though conquering hosts the towers assail,
Yet luxury and vice prevail :
The king at ease securely fate,
Nor dreamt of his approaching fate.

Now, while the heralds round proclaim
A feast in their great idol's name,
The city joins in the excess
Of revelling and drunkenness ;
In festive mirth the nobles join ;
The royal palace swims with wine ;
And they till night the feast prolong
In roaring mirth and drunken song.

The

The loose, alluring, lofty fair
Amongst the crowd the banquet share ;
Join every song with warbling lays,
And every idol god they praise.

The reeling king, amidst the roar,
His idols to exalt the more,
Commands, and soon a party brings
God's ravag'd temple's holy things :
And, standing on destruction's brink,
They in the golden vessels drink,
Which from God's altar had been brought,
And great JEHOVAH set at nought.

But, 'midst the riot and the noise,
A strange appearance check'd their joys :
Against the plaster of the wall
An hand and pen surpriz'd them all :
Strange mystic characters it drew.
The king, astonish'd at the view,
In vast amazement wildly star'd,
And scarce to look upon it dar'd :

32 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

To deep dismay his soul resign'd ;
Strong terror shook his labouring mind ;
And, pale with terror and affright,
His trembling knees together smite.

Then with loud voice the monarch cries ;
Bring hither every man that's wise ;
And let our learned men proceed
These wonderous characters to read.
Great things shall instantly be done
For him who shall relieve the throne.
Immediately the learned band
Strive to perform the king's command
With all their skill ; but strive in vain
The mystic writing to explain.

Then, to relieve the monarch's cares,
His royal mother soon appears ;
Let the king ever live, she cry'd,
Nor in his wishes stand deny'd ;
For know, thy city walls contain
A wonderous man, who can explain

All

All hidden depths. To him is given
The Spirit of the God of heaven.
Him, skill'd in all the depths of thought,
From Judah's land thy grandsire brought:
His wisdom try'd, the monarch prais'd,
And over the magicians rais'd.
Let Daniel then be call'd with speed;
The wonderous writing he will read.
The monarch then in haste commands:
Before his throne the prophet stands.
Art thou the man, the king enquir'd,
That, by the holy Gods inspir'd,
Didst my great father's dreams explain;
And wast the wonder of his reign?
A great occasion calls thee here:
We have beheld with shivering fear,
Yon figures drawn by power divine;
And dreadful in our sight they shine.
But our wise men all strive in vain,
Nor can the characters explain.

34 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

If thou the wonderous lines canst read,
And let me know what is decreed;
Thou shalt a scarlet garment wear,
A chain of gold shall be thy share,
And in the kingdom thou shalt stand
Exalted to the third command:
Let other men, the prophet cry'd,
The favours of the crown divide.
The writing on the wall I see,
This to explain belongs to me.
But first, great monarch, call to mind
How bright thy royal grandeur shin'd!
Imperial, awful, lifted high
In dazzling heights of majesty!
But, with the insolence of pride,
The God that rais'd him he defy'd:
The offended power to vengeance rose;
Him from the height of empire throws,
Amongst the beasts to take abode,
Till he at length rever'd the God.

This great event to thee was known ;
Yet thou in pride hast held thy throne :
Thy feast with impious deeds is stain'd,
And in thy cups thou hast prophan'd
This night, with insolence and scorn,
The vessels from his temple torn.
For this the GOD yon writing sends,
To let thee know thy empire ends ;
The GOD that all thy deeds surveys,
Hath number'd and fill'd up thy days :
Thy kingdom's weigh'd in equal scales,
And o'er thy war the foe prevails :
The Medes and Persians seize the throne ;
Thy empire falls, O Babylon !

The king commands to give the bard
The honours which he had declar'd :
But, swift to urge the monarch's fate,
Soon thunder'd at the palace gate
The warlike foe. The guards they slay,
Then through the palace take their way ;

36 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Fierce as a flame the army drives;
The king and nobles lose their lives;
And mingled carnage spreads the ground,
Where late loud mirth the banquet crown'd.

The Persian prince, with watchful care,
Had through Euphrates drove the war;
And at the silent midnight hour
Into the town his armies pour.
When night had wrapt the land in shade,
Vast breaches in the banks they made:
Across the lands the waters fly,
And leave the channel almost dry:
The eager armies ford the stream,
And to the gates at midnight came:
The brazen gates oppose them not,
The drunken citizens forgot
To make them fast: and in the shade
The foe an easy conquest made.
The Persian chief, renown'd for might,
Now conquer'd in his uncle's right:

Cyrus

Cyrus the noble conquest gains,
And on the throne Darius reigns.

HISTORY THE FIFTH.

*The Prophet Daniel miraculously preserved in the
Den of Lions.*

Daniel, ch. vi.

WHEN old Darius seiz'd the throne
And empire of great Babylon,
Amongst the nobles Daniel sate,
Long us'd to the affairs of state.
The mighty kingdom vast and wide,
Six score large provinces divide.
To each a prince the king assign'd,
The business of the crown to mind.
These princes, spread o'er all the land,
Three noble presidents command;

Examine

38 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Examine the accompts they give,

And the vast revenue receive.

Of these good Daniel was the first,

And proving diligent and just,

The king well-pleas'd his care surveys,

And him intended still to raise.

But discontent and gloomy hate

Seiz'd all the officers of state :

They view the chief with scornful eyes,

With growing rancour see him rise ;

Seek to accuse him to the crown,

And stand resolv'd to pull him down.

Long had they strove, with watchful mind,

Some error or mistake to find

In his accompts. But all was clear.

Nor could they e'er disgrace him there.

Inrag'd they cry'd, we strive in vain !

Nor can we an advantage gain,

To crush this over-bearing Jew,

While we his moral conduct view !

But

But all who have observ'd his ways,
Must know how fervently he prays;
Nor can we think on any score
He will consent to pray no more.
Here let us then our plot prepare,
And we shall take him in the snare.

Then to the king, with fraudulent aim,
All the assembled princes came:
Dread sovereign! whose extended sway
The kingdoms of the world obey;
Whose empire knows no bounds, they cry;
No equal thou beneath the sky!
Thy princes and thy nobles all
With reverent awe before thee fall,
And their great conqueror adore:
There are no worlds to conquer more!
Then listen to thy servants prayer,
Who make thy dignity their care:
Pass from thy throne the high decree,
(For where's the god can equal thee!)

That

40 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

That who to any other prays
For the full space of thirty days,
Shall his impiety deplore
In the deep den where ~~mon~~ns roar :
Their greedy jaws his flesh shall fill ;
There let him pray to whom he will !
Let the decree with speed be wrote ;
When sign'd by thee it alters not !—
The incautious king not long delays ;
But tickled with their fulsome praise,
Not knowing their intention, he
Signs with his signet the decree.
Daniel beheld the writing sign'd,
But stood determin'd in his mind :
Depending on JEHOVAN's aid,
Three times a day the prophet pray'd :
His window open on the skies
Where Zion low in ruin lies.
The eager princes now prepare
To take the good man in their snare ;

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 43

They catch him on his knees: then bring,
And all accuse him to the king.

The king too late his folly learns,
And much his mad decree he mourns:
The prophet's life he makes his care;
And strives with all his might to spare,
But near the throne the nobles draw,
And plead the honour of the law
Of Medes and Persians; never yet
Allow'd to alter or remit.—

The king in grief admits the plea:
And Daniel's brought without delay.
Trust in thy God! the monarch cry'd:
His mighty power, so often try'd,
Protects the goodness which he gave;
And he can from the lions save!
Then in the den the prophet's thrown.
Against the mouth they roll a stone,
On this was fix'd the royal seal,
That no foul stratagem prevail.

12 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

When to the den good Daniel came,
The furious beasts at once grow tame :
They him with locks of kindness meet,
 Crowd round, and fawning lick his feet.
But, full of grief and bitter woes,
The monarch to his palace goes :
When, anxious in his servant's cause,
From food or rest his heart withdraws ;
And in confusion and dismay
He pass'd the sleepless night away.
But when the night her shades withdrew,
And rising morn appear'd in view,
Swift to the lions den he ran ;
Remov'd the stone, and thus began :
O Daniel ! Daniel ! Oh, my friend !
Unjustly hast thou found thy end !
Except the God thou hast rever'd,
Hath in this needful hour appear'd,
To vindicate thy righteous cause,
And save thee from the lions jaws !

If

If yet thou liv'st! but ah, I fear
 That I no more thy voice shall hear!
 If yet thou breath'st the vital air,
 Exalt thy voice! with speed declare!
 Kindly relieve the anxious throne,
 And through the nations make it known,
 That God, who thee such wisdom gave,
 In every case is strong to save.
 Let the king live for ever! then
 Reply'd the prophet from the den;
 Thy servant here in safety lies!
 For a fair native of the skies
 My God hath sent; whose glory bright
 Shone round the den with heavenly light:
 With trembling awe the lions view,
 And from their helpless prey withdrew.
 I then approach'd them undismay'd,
 And they with me like spaniels play'd.
 Such favour Israel's God hath shewn,
 And hath my innocence made known;

14 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

For I from soul offence am free
Against my God, O king, or thee !
The king could scarce contain his joy,
While Daniel made this short reply.
In haste he gives command, and then
From the deep, dark-mouth'd, dreadful den
They draw the prophet up : The first,
Whether he faulty was or just,
That e'er return'd from thence. In haste
The frowning king commands to cast
Into the horrid yawning den,
The envious band of wicked men
That had, with hellish rancour fir'd,
Against the prophet's life conspir'd.
Then, with their wives and children all,
Into destruction's jaws they fall :
The furious beasts, with horrid roar,
The falling crowd in pieces tore ;
And there their wretched end they found
Before their feet could reach the ground.

The

The monarch then the orders sent,
Which fir'd the nations as they went,
Through every realm, where'er it lay,
That was subjected to his sway ;
That when these wonderous deeds they hear,
The God of Israel they revere ;
And tremble at his mighty name
From whence such great deliverance came.
For he is worthy of all praise !
Holy and just are all his ways !
On him his people may depend,
For his great kingdom hath no end.

HISTORY THE SIXTH.

Cyrus makes a Decree for the Return of the Jews, and rebuilding the Temple. Several Families return: and the Foundation of the Temple is laid. The Work is carried on with great Discouragement through several Reigns: At last it is finished, and dedicated.

Ezra, from ch. i. to vi.

ONE year Darius held the throne
Of Persia and of Babylon.
His kinsman Cyrus then succeeds,
Who stood renown'd for noble deeds.
This prudent prince with ceaseless cares,
Settled the empire's great affairs;
And was for worthiness renown'd
Through all the heathen nations round.
Still Daniel at the court remain'd,
And highest reputation gain'd :

For

For he grown old in state affairs,
And equal to a nation's cares,
Attended on the Persian throne,
And was through the vast empire known.
Then full display'd before the seer
The ancient prophecies appear :
These as his anxious eye pursu'd,
The great decree of heaven he view'd :
Great Jeremiah taught the strain,
That Israel should return again ;
And under mild propitious skies
Once more the towers of Zion rise :
When seventy years in Shinar's land
The humbled nation had remain'd.

Then to his God the prophet pray'd :
Nor was the promise long delay'd.
Great Cyrus, from the Persian throne,
Makes Israel's deep distress his own :
Their God's great glories strives to learn,
And makes a law for their return.

A prince

48 HISTORY of the BIBLE

A prince amongst the tribes remain'd
Who had the captives favour gain'd ;
Of good Josiah's race he came,
And great Zerubbabel his name.
He by the monarch was decreed
Once more to lead the chosen seed
To their own land, which heaven affigr
And with him in commission join'd,
To oversee the holy place,
Stood Jeshua the high priest : his race
From Aaron rose ; and he abode
True to the worship of his God.

Great Cyrus then with care restor'd
The holy vessels of the L O R D ;
Which Babel's king, with impious thoug
Had from his ravag'd temple brought :
Which, by fierce war and rapine gain'd,
In idol temples were detain'd.
Five thousand vessels, whose device
Exceeded those of costly price,

In burnish'd gold and silver burn'd ;
All these the Persian king return'd.

Then over great Euphrates' stream
With silent joy the captives came :
Their hearts high beating at the view,
Could scarce believe their ransom true :
But soon they sing their growing joys,
And shout JEHOVAH to the skies.
The favour'd nation then regains
Their ancient cities and their plains :
The hill, the vale, or spreading shade,
Where their forefathers bones were laid :
Then soon at Zion's hill appear,
And hold a grand assembly there.
Then, aided by the Persian king,
They marble stones and timber bring :
And all who in the work are skill'd,
Prepare the temple to rebuild :
When, trusting in JEHOVAH's aid,
The builders the foundation laid.

50 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

But, e'er the infant structure rose,

The rumour to Samaria goes.

And all the rulers, when they hear,

Soon at Jerusalem appear.

Let us unite with you, they cry'd,

And stand to latest time ally'd.

Why should our race from you divide!

For of your God we stand in awe,

And square our conduct by his law.

For when at first our nation came

Across the great Euphrates' stream,

The God of Israel was unknown,

And every people serv'd their own.

The offended God in wrath proceeds,

By lions torn the nation bleeds:

Great Esarhaddon to appease

The God, and give his subjects ease,

A Jewish priest amongst us brought,

Who your religious worship taught:

Then

Then let us, since your GOD we fear,
 Unite with you, and worship here.
 To this the prince and priest reply :
 What you request we must deny !
 Our GOD his favour hath decreed
 To faithful Abraham, and his seed :
 With us, in each religious rite,
 No other nation must unite.

This flat denial gave offence :
 Gloomy and murmuring soon from thence
 Depart the chiefs. In wrath they join,
 And seek to frustrate the design.
 From time to time each method use
 To trouble and distress the Jews :
 And now, determin'd foes to peace,
 They strive to make the building cease.
 By open force or secret fraud ;
 Some they corrupted, some they aw'd ;
 So that the work but little gain'd
 The full seven years that Cyrus reign'd.

52 HISTOR Y of the BIBLE.

And when his son the throne ascends,
They still pursue their wicked ends ;
For while Cambyses bears the sway,
The building suffer'd great delay.
When the usurper * seiz'd the throne,
They make their open hatred known ;
Accuse the nation to the king ;
And soon a royal edict bring,
By which 'tis absolute decreed
The Jews no farther shall proceed :
The traitor slain, Darius rose,
And on again the building goes.
Now aided by the Persian throne,
And great JEHOVAH's favour known,
Which by two prophets † was declar'd,
The prince and priest no labour spar'd.

Now twenty times the circling sun
Through the twelve heavenly signs had run,
Since the great structure was begun ;

When

* Smerdis the Magian. † Haggai and Zechariah.

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 53

When the glad tribes with shouts proclaim
The work compleat ; the finish'd frame.
To dedication they proceed ;
The incense smokes, the victims bleed ;
And all religious rites appear,
Fix'd in their ancient order there.
But soft emotion heav'd the breast
Of the old fathers of the rest,
That at Jerusalem had been,
And had the former temple seen :
The present so unlike appears,
That with the shouts they mix their tears.

HISTORY

HISTORY THE SEVENTH.

*Of Esther and Mordecai.*Book of *Esther* throughout.

WHILE thirty years Darius reign'd,
 His friendship to the Jews remain'd.
 His son great Xerxes next succeeds,
 And ratifies his father's deeds.
 When twenty years extends his reign,
 He was by impious treachery slain.
 Great Ahasuerus * then arose ;
 And having conquer'd all his foes,
 He, firmly seated on his throne,
 To make his royal bounty known,
 A feast for all his lords ordain'd,
 Which near two hundred days remain'd.
 These days being ended, seven days more
 He feasts the city. Rich and poor

Might.

* Called by historians Artaxerxes Longimanus.

Might in the kingly banquet join,
And quaff at will the royal wine.
At the same time the ladies share,
In the apartments of the fair,
The queen's rich treat, with dainties crown'd,
And mirth and festive joys abound.

On the seventh day, the king elate,
As on his regal seat he sat,
Commands to bring his beauteous queen,
Who was admir'd as soon as seen,
Wearing her royal crown of gold,
That all her beauty might behold.
The queen rejects the high command ;
Nor will her courage bear to stand
Appointed as a public shew,
And set for all the town to view.
The king, enrag'd to be deny'd,
The aged statesmen's counsel try'd ;
Who fearing this example might
Deprive the husbands of their right,

56 HISTOR Y. of the B I B L E.

And women, forward to rebel,
Might imitate the queen too well ;
Advis'd the king without delay
To put the imprudent fair away.
The king approv'd of what they said,
And banish'd Vashti from his bed.

Then round the land the heralds sought,
And numbers of fair virgins brought,
Array'd in beauty's blooming charms,
And worthy of a monarch's arms,
That she who best deserv'd the grace
Might take the banish'd fair one's place.

Though six successive kings had reign'd,
Since Israel's sons had freedom gain'd ;
And seventy circling years were fled,
Yet wide o'er all the empire spread,
Great numbers of the Jews appear ;
Who rather chose to settle there.
One Mordecai, a Jew, that fate
As porter of the palace gate,

Brough

Brought up a virgin, that in blood
 Nearly related to him stood :
 The maid in artless beauty shone :
 She was presented to the throne ;
 The royal favor soon she gain'd,
 And in the room of Vashti reign'd.

Two eunuchs, * with resentment fir'd,
 Against the monarch's life conspir'd ;
 This from the Jew they could not hide ;
 Accus'd by Mordecai, they dy'd.

Supreme in favour near the throne,
 Rever'd by all, proud Haman shone :
 From hated Amalek he springs ;
 And off the offspring of her kings.
 To this proud minion of the crown,
 The servile courtiers all bow down !
 And whereso'er he takes his way,
 With highest reverence homage pay.

* It is supposed, that these eunuchs were of Vashti's train, and in this manner resented their mistress' disgrace.

58 : HISTORY of the BIBLE,

But Mordecai, untouched by awe,
The royal favourite daily saw
With solemn stiffness on his brow,
Nor would he condescend to bow.
This Haman saw, with envious eye
And growing rage, as he went by:
But on a single man to fall,
Was for his great revenge too small:
He therefore in his wrath decreed
For this to make the nation bleed;
And instantly to urge their fate:
A vengeance worthy of his hate!

To bring about his fierce design
He then proceeded to divine,
Then cast the lots without delay,
To fix upon a lucky day:
And with determin'd rage pursues
His wicked and revengeful views.
Then near the throne the monster draws,
And tells the monarch, that his laws

Are

Are interrupted and made void ;
Except a people be destroy'd,
That are throughout the empire known,
By laws and customs of their own :
This people are the Jews. The king,
At once consenting to the thing,
Sign'd with his seal the dread command,
Which ever unrevok'd must stand,
That all the Jews his realms contain
Must on a certain day be slain.

Good Mordecai, with anxious mind,
Heard that the dire decree was sign'd :
Loud lamentation makes the chief,
He sackcloth wears to shew his grief ;
Near to his heart the nation lies,
And loud and frequent were their cries,
The lovely queen, in her recess,
Soon hears the news of their distress ;
And sends her maids the cause to learn,
Who with the answer soon return :

66 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

For Mordecai the whole makes known,
And begs she will address the throne.
Perhaps the king may favour give ;
And let the injur'd nation live.

The queen from the request withdraws,
Because contrary to the laws :
For whōdē'er in their distress,
Shall to the royal presence pres,
And no peculiar favour gain,
Must for the rash attempt be stain.
To this the Jewish chief returns,
While all his heart with anguish burns,
Think not, O queen, the palace walls
Will save thee when thy nation falls !
Rather conclude, that God made
Thee noble, for his people's aid,
That thou may'st needful succour give,
And by thy means his Israel live.
Then fast and pray, the queen replies,
And humbly supplicate the skies

T

Three days successive. To the king
My much-wrong'd country's cause I'll bring,
And save her sons from what's decreed,
Or perish if I can't succeed !

Three days the nation all appears
In solemn sadness, and in tears,
With humble fasting prostrate fall,
And on the God of Israel call ;

Approach his throne with fervent prayer,
And beg he will his people spate :

While the young queen, with fervent mind,
Their pious prayers with fasting join'd.

On the third day the beauteous queen
Drest in her royal robes was seen ;

And, bright in blooming charms, the dame
Before the youthful monarch came.

The king, then sitting on his throne,
Directly made his favour known :

And when he saw the fair one stand,
Stretch'd out the sceptre in his hand.

Speak

62 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Speak thy request, O queen ! he cry'd :
My consort cannot stand deny'd.
With modest sweetness in her eyes,
The queen approach'd, and thus replies :
To-morrow I a feast prepare ;
Then let the king the banquet share,
With Haman join'd. The king approv'd
The motion of his best belov'd ;
And to the apartment of the dame,
With Haman to the banquet came :
And there in love the royal guest
Enquir'd what was his queen's request :
Let me your majesty implore
To grace my banquet one day more
With Haman ; then I shall declare,
Reply'd with smiles the royal fair.

With pride the haughty favourite swells ;
And to his wife and kindred tells,
What high respect he late had seen,
And how distinguish'd by the queen.

But as he past the palace gate,
Where Mordecai in sadness sate,
The Jewish chief with gloomy frown
Beheld the minion of the crown
Nor would he the least honour shew
To this his country's mortal foe.
This haughty Haman could not bear,
And to his kindred tells his care :
Regard not such a slave ! they cry ;
But make a gallows strong and high :
Report his conduct to the king !
And let the gloomy rebel swing !
The lucky thought the statesman prais'd ;
The opprobrious timber soon was rais'd :
To-morrow e'er 'tis noon, he cries,
The wretch that dare insult me dies !
The morning star, with silver ray,
Peep'd o'er the hills, and promis'd day ;
The king long e'er his time awoke,
And to his servants thus he spoke :

For

64 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

For further rest I strive in vain ;
Then bring the records of my reign,
And read before me. They proceed ;
And in the chronicles they read,
How Mordecai, the honest Jew,
To Ahasuerus ever true,
Discover'd to his royal bride
A plot for which the traitors dy'd.
And what, in haste the king reply'd,
Hath for this virtuous man been done ?
Who by his wisdom sav'd the throne.
The servants said, they could not learn
That he had found the least return.
Who stands without ? the monarch calls.
Haman, they cry—it lucky falls ;
Let him approach ! That moment came,
With vengeful spirit all on flame,
The haughty favourite, pale with hate,
To beg the king to urge the fate

Of the uncourtly Mordecai,
 And let him on the gallows die.
 But e'er he could accuse the man,
 In haste the monarch thus began :
 Haman! one man above the rest
 Deserves to have my love express !
 To honour him I have decreed !
 Then tell me how we shall proceed !
 Haman revolving in his mind
 For whom this honour was design'd :
 Is there a man, his thoughts reply,
 The king would honour more than I !
 Then on the king he turns his eyes,
 And to the question thus replies :
 Let royal robes the man adorn,
 The same your majesty has worn ;
 Your crown of gold upon his head ;
 And let him through the streets be led,
 Riding your own high-mettled steed ;
 Let some great prince with him proceed,

66 HISTOR Y of the B I B L E.

And through the city thus proclaim,
His rising dignity and name.
Let all behold the man appear !
That nations must henceforth revere !
His honour is the king's delight !
Ye Persians, in his praise unite !—
The worthy man I have in view,
Is honest Mordecai the Jew ;
Reply'd the king.—With speed be gone,
And let all this for him be done !
He latent treason scorn'd to hide,
Accus'd by him the traitors dy'd.
Cut to the heart the favourite star'd,
But not to shew his hatred dar'd :
The case admits of no delay ;
The king's command he must obey.
So the great object of his hate
He cloath'd in robes of royal state,
And through the city streets proclaim'd
The honours which himself had nam'd.

Then

Then to his house proud Haman went
 In gloomy care and discontent;
 And lets his wife and kindred know
 The honours which his mortal foe
 Had from his hand receiv'd. They all
 From this infer the favourite's fall :
 And think each stratagem will fail,
 And never o'er his foes prevail.

While these events their wonder claim,
 A message to the statesman came :
 To attend the king he must prepare,
 And in queen Esther's banquet share.
 There, seated at the royal treat,
 He hears the monarch thus repeat
 His former claim. Queen Esther say,
 What's thy request, without delay :
 Clearly to view thy wishes bring,
 And learn the bounty of a king.—
 My life at my petition give !
 And let my guiltless people live !

68 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Reply'd the queen. A cruel foe
Proposes by one mighty blow
To cut a nation off! — My fair!
In haste reply'd the king, who dare
Do this! — The wicked man you see,
Rejoin'd the queen, and Haman's he!
In growing wrath the monarch rose,
And to the palace garden goes.
But soon he to the queen returns,
And from her chamberlain he learns,
That Haman, in his envious spite,
Had rais'd a gallows vast in height,
Whereon he had design'd should die
The honest Jew, good Mordecai.
Then let himself the pleasure taste!
And this high honour be his last!
Commands the king. The guards attend
And thus proud Haman found his end.
The day that urg'd the minion's fate,
The monarch heard the queen relate

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 69

That Mordecai her kinsman was ;
And him he rais'd to Haman's place.

Though due reward the statesman gain'd,
Yet the dire mischief still remain'd.
To death devote the nation lay ;
Firm the decree, and fix'd the day.
To turn the impending storm aside,
Queen Esther to the king apply'd.
But the destructive, dire command
Was sign'd, and unrevok'd must stand.
The monarch then, the Jews to save
To all the nation licence gave,
That when the bloody time drew near,
They might in shining arms appear ;
Withstand whoe'er against them rose,
And in fair combat meet their foes.
In valour then the Jews proceed,
And all their bold opposers bleed ;
Throughout the empire conquest gain,
And twenty thousand men were slain.

Deliver'd

70 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Deliver'd thus they jointly raise
High strains of gratitude and praise.
One day in solemn fast they join
In memory of the base design :
Then two in festive mirth employ,
And loud and general was the joy.

H I S T O R Y THE E I G H T H.

Of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Book of *Ezra* and Book of *Nehemiah* through-
out.

THOUGH eighty summer suns had burn'd,
Since Judah's captive sons return'd ;
And sixty smiling springs appear'd
Since they their second temple rear'd ;
Yet weak and feeble they remain'd,
And heathen customs on them gain'd :

Their

Their city wall in ruin lies,
No stately towers or ramparts rise :
In native Hebrew, they adore
The God of Israel now no more :
The Chaldeans tongue alone prevails ;
Their zeal for God's true worship fails ;
The people from his rites withdraw ;
Nor can their rulers read his law :
Its precepts and its threats forgot,
The feeble nation knew it not.
Ally'd to all the nations round,
Strange wives, and heathen rites abound.
A mongrel tongue their children speak ;
Poor are their priests, their warriors weak.
Six years had Ahasuerus reign'd,
When Ezra a commission gain'd,
To feeble Zion to repair,
And rectify abuses there.
This chief, well skill'd in things divine,
From the high priest deriv'd his line,
That

72 HISTOR Y of the BIBLE.

That by the raging sword had dy'd,
When the first temple was destroy'd.
In learning's spacious field approv'd,
And by his nation well belov'd,
Laden with gifts, and high in fame,
To Zion's broken walls he came.
With Ezra in the journey join'd
A numerous train, whose willing mind
A secret, ardent longing felt,
To see where their forefathers dwelt.
The chief his orders from the throne
Made to the king's lieutenants known:
Then in his government he sat,
And settled both the church and state
According to the ancient law.
The trembling nation heard with awe
The precepts which the book contain'd,
Now in the Chaldean * tongue explain'd.

Then

* Ezra with great care collected the sacred writings
which had been scattered about, and almost lost during

Then from the land good Ezra drives
The numerous train of heathen wives
The Jews had taken ; and in tears
For this offence the land appears.
The wives and children they had born
Depart, and must no more return.

The ruler then with holy dread
Commands the scriptures to be read :
Collects the holy books with care,
And settles every great affair,
With honour and with high applause,
By Israel's long neglected laws.

When Ezra fifteen years had sway'd,
Another governor was made :
And from the Persian throne he came ;
Great Nehemiah was his name.

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L

Though

the captivity, and translated the law and the prophets into
the Chaldee language ; the knowledge of the ancient He-
brew being almost lost, during the seventy years the Jews
remained in Babylon.

74 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Though better times the nation saw
Since they were govern'd by the law ;
Yet much contempt on Zion falls,
While low in ruin lie her walls ;
And burnt her numerous gates appear'd,
Which all this time had not been rear'd.

These evils at the Persian throne
Were made to Nehemiah known.

The news some of his nation bring,
As he attended on the king.

Deep anguish labour'd in his breast,
Which plainly by his look's express'd ;
When near with royal wine he draws,
The king observ'd, and ask'd the cause :
The chief declares. The king appears
Affected with his servant's tears,
And him with full commission sends
To his poor brethren, and his friends,
To build their walls, their gates to rear,
And make Jerusalem appear

Worthy respect. Without delay
The worthy man pursu'd his way.
He soon a great assembly calls ;
And to rebuild the city walls
The whole assembled nation tries ;
And from the rubbish now they rise.
But Israel's old inveterate foes,
With all their might the work oppose :
By various arts disturb the peace,
And seek to make the building cease.
The noble chief, with honest views,
Determin'd the great work pursues.
Him, zealous in his country's cause,
No flattery moves, no threatening awes.
The willing nation he divides,
Which vast, incessant toil abides ;
One party on the work attends ;
Another from the foe defends ;
And the industrious builders stand
Each with his weapon in his hand.

76 HISTORY of the BIBLE,

Successful on the building goes,
And soon vast walls the town inclose.
With shouts of joy, and songs of praise,
At last the massy gates they raise :
And a great day of sacrifice
Proclaims the nation's ardent joys.

Ten years the governor remain'd,
And all his people's favour gain'd.
With pious Ezra he unites
To fix religion's sacred rites.
And synagogues through all the land
The governor and priest ordain'd ;
That all the tribes, with solemn awe,
Might hear the prophets and the law.
In every case the nation's friend,
The chief would every care attend ;
And having settled their affairs,
He to the Persian court repairs.
Five years good Nehemiah stay'd,
And then, to lend his country aid,

He

He to his government return'd :

When soon with great concern he learn'd,

That in his absence from the land

The heathens had advantage gain'd,

And that the temple was profan'd :

For Ammonitish goods were stor'd

Within the dwelling of the LORD ;

And through the land strange wives abound,

Fetch'd from the heathen nations round.

His anger rising at the view,

The goods he from the temple threw,

And then oblig'd without delay

The tribes to put their wives away ;

Or from the land they must depart.

The high priest's son, whose easy heart

Had been by female charms insnar'd,

To Judah's daughters had preferr'd,

And to his bed advanc'd a dame

That from Samaria's mountain came,

The

78 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

The daughter of the prince. The priest
For this offence the chief dismiss'd
From Israel's land. His spouse's fire,
In whom both pride and rage conspire,
Gains licence from the Persian throne,
To build a temple of his own;
And in the priesthood fix'd his son.
Then a vast pile appears in sight
On Gerizim's exalted height;
At a vast distance seen to rise,
The same in structure and in size
As that which on mount Zion stands,
And all Jerusalem commands.
Mannasseh the high priesthood gains,
And soon against the Jews maintains,
That here's the place where Israel's GOD
Design'd to fix his last abode.
To the true GOD they altars raise,
The incense smokes, the victims blaze;

Ai

each religious rite remain'd
Moses in the law ordain'd.
As the temple they oppose,
on an inveterate hatred rose
between the nations. Various Jews,
Whom vengeance for their crimes pursues,
At fair Samaria's hill appear,
And shun the arm of justice there.
A mongrel people hence proceeds ;
And an increasing envy breeds
Through a long course of circling years,
And hate in various forms appears.

HISTORY THE NINTH.

The Old and New Testament connected, by a brief Sketch of the State of the Jewish Nation, from the Death of Nehemiah, to the Birth of Christ. Including a Period of about 400 Years.

WHILE various kings o'er Persia reign'd,
 The Jewish church and state remain'd
 As fix'd by Nehemiah's care ;
 And to Jerusalem repair
 The tribes to worship. But the law
 Was weekly read, with solemn awe,
 Throughout the land, that all might hear,
 And the great God of Israel fear :
 To the high priest belong'd the sway ;
 And him the willing tribes obey
 In sacred and in civil things ;
 And hence dissention often springs :

The

The eldest son of Aaron's race
Not always could obtain the place :
The Persian kings, whene'er they chose,
Presum'd the high priest to depose,
And raise another. For this cause
His vengeful sword Johanan draws,
When his young brother durst rebel ;
And Jeshua in the temple fell.

Supreme o'er all the world appears
The Persian throne for ninety years.
Then, fierce as a devouring flame,
The mighty Macedonian came ;
And as a bolt of thunder flies,
On burning wheels along the skies,
Resistless raging from afar
Amongst the nations drives his war.
On Persia first his force he bends,
Darius falls, + his empire ends.

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M

The

+ There were five kings reigned in Persia, from Artax-
erxes Longimanus, who was the Ahasuheres of the scrip-

32 HISTOR Y of the B I B L E.

The vanquish'd world before him flies,
Whoever dare withstand him dies.

When sea-girt Tyrus, with her walls,
Before the mighty conqueror falls ;
His swelling heart with anger burns,
And on the Jews his war he turns ;
Because, before the town he gain'd,
To send him aid they had disdain'd.
The anger of the dreadful chief
Fill'd all Jerusalem with grief :
When, by a vision warn'd, the priest,
In all his holy garments dress'd,
Goes forth with a religious band,
And they to meet the conqueror stand ;
The priests and levites all unite,
In long procession dress'd in white.

tures, to the destruction of the Persian empire by Al
der the Great : 1. Darius Nothus ; 2. Artaxerxes Mnœ
s. Ochus ; 4. Arogus ; 5. Darius Codomannus.

The king, when the high priest he saw,
Stood deep impress'd with sacred awe ;
He venerates the holy man,
And eager to embrace him ran.
For this same man in glory bright
In vision stood before his sight,
Before his troops on Persia fall,
And told him, he should conquer all.
The monarch lays his weapons down,
And enters, as a friend, the town ;
Each kingly favour which they want
He freely condescends to grant ;
To Israel's God in sacrifice
His grateful adorations rise ;
And when the costly offerings cease,
He from the land departs in peace.
In early youth the conqueror dy'd.
His generals then the world divide ;
And Israel's subject land remain'd
The lot of him who Egypt gain'd.

84 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Three kings * in Egypt held the sway;
And them in peace the Jews obey
One hundred years. A fourth † arose,
Which all the offended priests oppose;
But urge the law of God in vain,
When he the temple would profane.
The king persists: but, smote by heaven,
He from the holy place was driven,
And soon in rage departs the land.
But as they durst his will withstand,
The raging king his wrath pursues
On his defenceless subject Jews
That dwell in Egypt, and refuse
To serve his gods. These brought in ch.
His place of public shews contains.
The gloomy tyrant swells with pride,
And orders them to be destroy'd

* 1. Ptolomy Soter; 2. Ptolomy Philadelphus;
Ptolomy Euergetus.

† Ptolomy Philopater.

By elephants. His will proclaim
 The heralds, and the city came
 To see the shew. Amongst the rest
 The king appears. Each mighty beast,
 To favour the unjust design,
 Made drunk with frankincense and wine.
 But with blind rage each monster flies
 On those who came to feast their eyes
 With blood and carnage. All around
 They pale in death o'erspread the ground ;
 And slaughter was the sport they found.
 }
 The Jews escape. Strange sights appear
 Amongst the stars, and fill with fear
 The cruel king, who then gives o'er,
 And seeks to vex the Jews no more.
 O'er Egypt then an * infant reigns ;
 And Syria's mighty † monarch gains

* Ptolomy Epiphanes, an infant of five years.

† Antiochus the Great.

86. HISTORY of the BIBLE,

The land of Judah ; and his sway
In peace the subject Jews obey ;
Their daily sacrifice prepare,
And by the law their conduct square.
In peace they dwelt for thirty years,
And then a cruel king + appears,
Whose savage heart with hatred burns,
And God's high worship overturns.
Fall of impiety and pride,
The God of Israel he defy'd ;
Resolv'd to make his worship cease,
And set up all the gods of Greece.
With this unjust and cruel aim
His army soon to Zion came ;
And, by the tyrant's stern command,
Spread blood and slaughter o'er the land.
The priests they from their altars drove,
Each pure religious rite remove,
And incense burn to Grecian Jove;

} Whose

+ Antiochus Epiphanes.

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 87

Whose statues in the temple rise;
And there a sow they sacrifice.

Then every one that durst abide
True to the law of Moses dy'd.
In every city of the land,
The cruel king the Jews constrain'd
To worship idols, and to eat
Unclean abominable meat.

The king, in wantonness of rage,
No station spares, or sex, or age;
The learn'd, the reverend, hoary head,
Dishonour'd joins the vulgar dead.
While by fierce tortures, racks, and fire,
A mother and seven sons expire.

The king, with swelling rage and pride,
All copies of God's law destroy'd:
And, the weak nation thus oppress'd,
The daily sacrifices ceas'd;
The priests all from the temple fled,
And grafts and weeds the courts o'erspread.

88 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

An aged priest * at Modin dwelt,
Who holy indignation felt
Rise in his heart, when in his view
A cowardly, apostate Jew
To gain the tyrant's favour sought,
And to his idols offerings brought.
Swift to the altar press'd the fire,
And quench'd the base, unhallow'd fire:
Zealous for GOD his sword he drew,
And the vile sacrificer slew.
Four valiant sons with him proceed,
And all the friends of idols bleed.
And when the train beheld them dead,
They all into the desert fled.
Here by their pious brethren join'd,
They with united zealous mind,
And fearless heart, to combat rose:
They dare the king's command oppose,
And face their country's cruel foes.

Where'er

* Mattathias, the father of the Maccabees.

Where'er their valiant parties spread,
 They laid the king's lieutenants dead ;
 O'erturn'd their altars, and restor'd
 The sacred worship of the Lord.

When the renowned hero dy'd,
 His valiant son his place supply'd.
 Brave Judas then to war proceeds,
 And boldly dares immortal deeds :
 With a small troop he fearless goes,
 And mighty armies overthrows ;
 Rages around : on hills or vales
 Alike his conquering sword prevails.
 Then Judah's streams ran blood, and all
 Who dare oppose brave Judas fall.
 To Zion then, with boundless joys,
 The conqueror and his army rise :
 They cleanse the temple, purge the floor,
 And God's true worship there restore :
 The incense smokes, the victims blaze,
 And great JEHOVAH's name they praise.

When the proud tyrant heard the news,
He vow'd revenge on all the Jews :
But on himself the vengeance falls,
And on his gods in vain he calls ;
For Heaven chastis'd his daring pride :
He in vast pain and horror dy'd.

Five years the Jews the war maintain,
Then Judas was in battle slain.
His brother Jonathan succeeds,
And emulates his brother's deeds.
Near twenty years this chief remain'd,
He various mighty battles gain'd ;
And both the church and state maintain'd.
By treachery at last he bled,
And Simon govern'd in his stead,
His valiant brother. Full seven years
He at the army's head appears :
The Jewish freedom he regain'd,
And o'er a willing people reign'd ;

Till basely murder'd, * he his throne
Left to his wife and valiant son.

Now vex'd by fierce contending kings,
Perpetual war in Syria springs ;
While thirty years Hyrcanus sway'd,
And some important conquests made,
Victorius o'er his country's foes,
In martial glory high he rose :
His war against Samaria burns,
And he their temple overturns,
And lays in ruins. From him springs
A noble line of Jewish + kings,

N 2

Which

* Simon was treacherously murdered at Jericho by Ptolemy his son-in-law, who, thinking to seize the government, murdered his father-in-law and two of his sons at a banquet. John Hyrcanus, another of his sons, succeeded his father.

+ The sovereigns of the Asmonæan family, that reigned in Judea from the death of Hyrcanus the son of Simon Maccabeus, were, 1. Aristobulus; 2. Alexander-Jannæus; 3. Alexandra; 4. Aristobulus; 5. Hyrcanus; and 6. Antigonus.

92 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Which seventy years the throne supply'd,
Till Herod all the race destroy'd.

Twice thirteen years before the day
That Herod rose to sovereign sway,
The Roman general Pompey gain'd
The towers of Zion, and prophan'd
The holy temple. Herod rose,
Though all the Jews his troops oppose :
By bribes at Rome his cause prevail'd,
Or else his utmost force had fail'd.
The Roman legions took the field,
Jerusalem was forc'd to yield
To power superior, and to own
A foreigner on Judah's throne.
Of Edom's race the tyrant came ;
In war high honours were his claim.
He rais'd his throne, and long it stoo'd
On murder, treachery, and blood :
He three and thirty years had reign'd,
And every vice his throne had stain'd ;

When

When God from his eternal throne
Sent down his well-beloved Son,
And, human nature to adorn,
At Bethlehem the babe was born.

[The Author thinks it incumbent upon him to acknowledge, that he hath received considerable assistance in this part of the work from Pideaux's Connexion of the Old and New Testament.]



HISTORY THE TENTH.

*Of the Patriarch J O B. **

Book of Job throughout.

FAIR in the east, in rural state,
 Dwelt wealthy Job, obscurely great ;
 True to the God that rules the skies,
 Each day his grateful offerings rise :
 Justice and truth upheld his throne,
 And every virtue was his own :
 The father of mankind he stood,
 And spent his days in doing good.
 Like other princes of his day,
 His substance in his cattle lay.

V a 1

* It is supposed, that the Patriarch Job lived in the time between Abraham and Moses : But as his History hath connexion with the History of the family of Abraham, and it standing in the Sacred Canon after the last History in the Old Testament, it was thought proper to introduce it here.

were his lowing herds ; and wide
sheep spread o'er the mountain side :
a thousand camels ready stand
bear his burdens o'er the land :
these five hundred asses join'd,
his servants care assign'd.

blooming sons amongst them share
high paternal love and care,
three fair daughters ; and remain
ride and pleasure of his reign.
live mirth they spent their time :
good man (lest some secret crime
I stain their souls) with pious care,
aily sacrifice and prayer,
fearing makes for each apart,
all the father in his heart.

h approbation from on high,
mighty Ruler of the sky
conduct of the chief surveys,
peaks his well deserved praise.

Amongst

96 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Amongst the bless'd high pleasure springs,
And heaven with loud applauses rings.

As through the skies his praises ran,

The envious foe of GOD and man

Approach'd the high eternal throne ;

And made his fly suspicions known.

He urg'd, that Job, in prosperous days,

Might spend his time in love and praise ;

But should the LORD his hand reverse,

He would his benefactor curse.

To this the Eternal GOD reply'd,

Then let the cause be fairly try'd :

His substance lies at thy command,

But on himself lay not thine hand.

The eldest son a feast prepar'd,

And all the rest the banquet shar'd ;

When to promote their highest good,

The parent by his altar stood.

To him, in haste, a servant ran,

And wildly staring thus began :

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 97

his day, my lord, at thy command
The oxen plow'd the furrow'd land ;
The asses graz'd close by their sides ;
But suddenly we were annoy'd
By a vast troop of armed men,
That Sabeans seem'd. The cattle then
They having seiz'd, with fury fall
On thy defenceless servants. All
Lie cold in death on yonder plain ;
To tell thee only I remain.
Scarce had he ceas'd, when to the chief
Another came, oppres'd with grief :
This day ere noon, my lord, he cries,
The lightning flash'd along the skies ;
Aft rolling sheets of sulph'rous flame
Mongst the sheep directly came ;
The flashing fire thy flocks destroy'd,
And with the sheep the shepherds dy'd :
Only have escap'd. A third
Approaches ere he spoke the word :

This day, he cry'd, the camels spread
 Wide o'er the land : and as they fed,
 Three troops of Chaldeans came in view ;
 Thy servants with the sword they slew,
 And seiz'd the cattle. While he spoke
 A fourth approach'd : An awful stroke,
 My lord, hath happen'd, soon he said,
 And laid thy sons and daughters dead :
 For as in cheerful feast they join,
 And quaff'd with joy the rosy wine,
 A whirlwind from the desert rose,
 And wrapt in clouds of dust it goes
 Directly to the palace walls,
 And the whole structure crashing falls ;
 The bodies in the ruins lie ;
 And not one soul escap'd but I.

The hoary fire his mantle tears,
 And instant shaves his silver hairs ;
 But still the dreadful shock he bears

Wor~~thy~~thy

nselves; no weakness shews;
majestic in his woes.
ate on the ground he falls,
great Creator calls.
o ! he calmly cries,
hy ways ! thy heart is wise !
takest all I have :
o the hand that gave !
as of woman born,
shall to earth return :
till my lips proclaim !
e and blefs thy name !
I delight the L O R D surveys
ubmission, and his praise ;
his high eternal throne
s his approbation known :
ye fiends ! with hellish spite
fraud and lies delight !
ou dumb ! let all his foes
od man support his woes !

100 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Trace with surprize his conduct o'er,
And dare accuse my saints no more !
Then near the throne fly Satan draws :
Ye Heavens ! he cries, is there not cause
For Job's submission ? in your eye
How many hapless wretches lie
With sickness and with pain oppres'd,
Whose goading anguish finds no rest !
His troubles Job unmov'd sustains,
While he in florid health remains :
But if his bone and flesh you touch,
He soon will cry, it is too much !
And like the vilest of his race,
Ye Gods ! he'll curse you to your face !
Satan soon hears the Lord reply,
In this my servant you may try ;
But spare his life. The crafty fiend,
Thus having the commission gain'd,
Smites the good man with sore disease,
And low in dust his glory lays.

Now with foul ulcers cover'd o'er,
He lies neglected on the floor :
In huge affliction and dismay,
The scorn of all mankind he lay ;
The beggar and the vagabond
Spard not their prince to spit upon ;
With bold derision round him press'd,
And made his miseries their jest.
But one more plague was still behind,
Which to the rest the daemон join'd :
The good man's wife his rage inspires,
He fills her soul with hellish fires ;
And, to augment each daring wrong,
He on the patriarch plays her tongue :
In rattling tone she silence broke,
And full of pride and scorn thus spoke :
Where are your prayers and offerings now ?
Go, abject wretch ! and pay your vow :
Worship the God who with a frown
Shows all his plagues and curses down !

But

But rather in his face I'd fly,
 I if I curs'd him could but die !
 Check the bold thought ! the fire replies :
 How rarely is a woman wise !
 The counsels of the eternal throne
 To us imperfectly are known :
 And though our cup with woes he fill,
 God may be good and gracious still.

The rumour of the good man's woes
 Soon to the neighbouring nations goes :
 Three well known princes then attend,
 To comfort their esteemed friend.
 With vast amazement and surprize
 They all behold him where he lies ;
 So full of misery, alas !
 And alter'd from what late he was,
 They know him not. When nearer view
 Convinc'd them that the whole was true,
 Each his rich mantle rent, then spread
 Dry ashes o'er his princely head,

And

And in deep sorrow and amaze
Sat down astonish'd full seven days.

Then Job the awful silence broke;
He in the depth of anguish spoke,
And in the most pathetic strains
Of his prodigious woes complains.
To him each friend in turn replies,
And seeks to vindicate the skies,
By urging that his fall proceeds
From some conceal'd atrocious deeds
That stain'd his soul. In bolder strain
Job will his innocence maintain;
And to the Heavens appeals. The God
Who shakes creation with his nod,
Descends to earth in clouds and storms,
And darkness his pavillion forms:
His voice out of the whirlwind broke,
And 'midst surrounding thunders spoke
The wisdom of his mighty plan.
How great is God! how abject man!

When

When more of GOD the patriarch saw,
And the perfection of his law,
The holy man was fill'd with awe ;
Confess'd his various vileness o'er,
And will maintain his works no more.
With tender heart the LORD forgives ;
Satan departs ; the patriarch lives :
And GOD, who now approv'd his way,
Shone on the evening of his day ;
Built up his house ; his wealth increas'd ;
With numerous sons and daughters blest'd ;
His strong old age with good supply'd,
And he in peace and honour dy'd.



T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
H O L Y B I B L E.
B O O K IX.

FROM THE
Birth to the Death of C H R I S T:
C O N T A I N I N G
The Transactions of about 33 Years.

VOL. IV.

P

1

HISTORY THE FIRST.

*The Birth of John the Baptist, the Forerunner
of the Messiah.*

Luke, ch. i.

THE long appointed time drew nigh,
Fix'd in the counsels of the sky,
For Heaven to bless this guilty earth
With the Almighty Saviour's birth.

Before old time began his flight,
While chaos reign'd and ancient night,
Where roll the beauteous worlds of light ; }
High in the heavens his throne he rear'd,
By all the angelic hosts rever'd ;
With his Eternal Father liv'd ;
A name above all names receiv'd ;
And stood the darling of the skies,
While boundless heights his glories rise.

108 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

But poor, lost, sinful man to save ;
Grim death to conquer and the grave ;
Heaven's rising wrath to pacify ;
And for our guilty race to die ;
From hell's wide jaws to snatch the prey ;
And chase her gloomy king away ;
He laid aside his starry crown,
And cloath'd in human flesh came down.

By each prophetic bard foretold,
His day the nation would behold ;
And from a spotless virgin's womb
Expects to see Messiah come.

But, ere the prince the land adorn,
His great forerunner must be born.

When Herod thirty years had reign'd,
And had his hated crown maintain'd
By vice and cruelty : (but now
It sat uneasy on his brow ;
And various troubles round him rose,
Which gave the tyrant no repose)

Th

There was a priest of blameless life,
Nam'd Zacharias; and his wife
Elizabeth: From Aaron's seed
Alike the pious pair proceed:
Of Israel's God they stood in awe,
His temple lov'd, and kept his law;
Yet had this virtuous happy pair
Liv'd to old age without an heir.
As he attended, in his turn,
To make the smoking incense burn,
The fire he on the altar laid,
The people at a distance pray'd;
The cloud arose; and on the right
An heavenly form appear'd in sight.
The priest, with fear and wild amaze,
Retreated from the beamy blaze:
When instantly the angel cries,
O Pious priest! all fear despise;
Thou art the favourite of the skies;



And

10 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

And God, propitious to thy prayer,
Will cause thy aged wife to bear.
John shalt thou call thy infant son,
And gladness thro' thy house shall run :
God's Spirit on the youth shall rest ;
And, with peculiar favour blest,
With glowing zeal his heart shall burn,
And many he to God shall turn.
The God whose presence Israel waits,
Descends from heaven's eternal gates !
He comes ! He comes without delay !
The prophet shall prepare his way.
To this the wondering priest replies :
Give me some token from the skies,
That it shall be as thou hast told ;
For both my wife and I are old.
The angel with a frown return'd,
(While still his glory brighter burn'd,)
To chase thy scruples, be it known,
I stand before the eternal throne ;

Gab

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 212

Gabriel my name in heaven. Should I,
Dost thou suppose, come here to lie !
No more indulge thy doubt ; be dumb
Till the appointed time shall come !

The heavenly power, thus having spoke,
Ascending in the incense' smoke,
Vanish'd from sight. The priest, afraid,
Astonish'd by the altar stay'd.

The fragrant incense ceas'd to burn ;
The people wait for his return ;
And numbers seek the cause to learn.

To them he beckon'd with his hand ;
No power of speech he can command.
When to his house he soon withdraws,
And leaves them wondering at the cause.

Soon the predicted blessing came ;
And pregnant grew the joyful dame.
When in due time a son she bore,
The father then was dumb no more.

112 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Loud strains of joy, and songs of praise,
The whole affected household raise.

John was the name he gave the boy,
Who stood his parents' pride and joy :
Strong grew the youth, and much his mind
To contemplation was inclin'd :
In the lone desert he abode,
Till he came forth to speak for God.

HISTORY THE SECOND.

*The Angel Gabriel appears to the Virgin Mary
and foretells the Conception and Birth of Christ*

Luke, ch. i.

AND now, commission'd from the skies
To Judah's plains great Gabriel flies :
Just at the opening verge of day
To Nazareth he wing'd his way :

On Heli's house his glory falls,
 And shines upon the humble walls.
 One virgin daughter bles'd the fire,
 Whom all the neighbouring youth admire,
 For every maiden virtue known,
 And past compare her beauty shone.
 Joseph to her had paid his vows,
 And his address the fair allows.

Bright as the burning beams of day,
 With garments white and pure as they,
 The angel came where Mary lay ; }
 With his soft touch awoke the maid,
 He smil'd around, and thus he said :
 Fair virgin, hail ! in favour high
 With the great monarch of the sky :
 Heaven's choicest blessings on thee rest ;
 Thou more than all thy sex art bles'd.
 Dazzled with heavenly glory bright,
 The virgin scarce could bear the sight.

With milder beams the angel shines,
And to the wondering fair rejoins :
Let no chill fear thy thoughts confound,
For, Mary, thou hast favour found ;
Favour with God, and born of thee
His Israel shall their Saviour see.
A son thou shalt conceive and bear,
To David's house he shall be heir.
The name of JESUS shall be given
To the young child, the heir of heaven :
His father's throne he shall ascend,
And of his kingdom be no end.
How can it be ! the maid reply'd :
'Tis known I am not yet a bride ;
And still remain unstain'd, and pure.—
The great prediction yet is sure :
For the Supreme Eternal Mind
Is not to common means confin'd,
Reply'd the angel : Thou, this hour
Made pregnant by his mighty power,

in due time MESSIAH bear:

Son of GOD shall be thy care;
Heir of Heaven shall suck thy breast,

wondering nations hail thee blest!

If a token thou require,

acharias' house retire,

the increasing joy attend

thy dear relative and friend;

in no more, but pregnant now,

months are past. I scarce know how

bear my joy, reply'd the maid:

, let it be as thou hast said!

the virgin then, without delay,

Judah's mountains took her way.

unto her kinsman's house she came,

saw with joy the pregnant dame,

both unite to praise the LORD,

rest depending on his word.

HISTORY THE THIRD.

The Birth of Christ, and the immediate Circumstances that attended it.

Luke, ch. ii.

NOW by the Spirit of the Lord,
According to his heavenly word,

The spotless virgin pregnant grows ;
And soon the sacred burden shews.
Of this her lover Joseph heard,
And the good man in grief appear'd.
He had espous'd the holy maid ;
Some time the nuptials were delay'd :
But now the happy time was come
He thought to take the fair one home.
At her dishonour much he griev'd,
A fault which could not be retriev'd :
But pity urg'd him yet to spare
The false and violated fair,

As

As he concludes her. Forc'd to part,
 He strives to tear her from his heart :
 Yet her dishonour will not spread ;
 But fears to take her to his bed.

While the good man had thus decreed,
 But doubted how he should proceed ;
 By night a vision on him shone,
 And thus the L ORD his will made known :
 No longer, Joseph, be afraid,
 But to thy bosom take the maid,
 Unstain'd and pure as virgin snows :
 The sacred burden, which she shews,
 From Heaven proceeds. A son she'll bear,
 To David's house he shall be heir :
 And JESUS thou his name shalt call ;
 The prince of heaven, the L ORD of all :
 And when his father's throne he wins,
 He'll save his people from their sins.
 The good man wakes with glad surprize ;
 Near to his heart the virgin lies :

Then

218 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Then soon her husband's house she gains,
But he from nuptial joys abstains
Till her appointed time was run,
And she brought forth her heavenly son.

Now mighty Rome's imperial sway
The nations of the world obey.
Augustus had the sceptre gain'd ;
And he in peace and glory reign'd :
When through the various conquer'd lands
The monarch's high decree * commands,
In every town a strict survey,
That all may lawful tribute pay.

As

* This decree was passed at Rome three years before the birth of Christ. So much time was taken in carrying through the other provinces of the empire, a register was now made in the several cities of Judea : but no taxes were paid to the Romans till twelve years after this time, when Archelaus, the son of Herod, was put down from his government for his injustice and other crimes, and Judea was formed into a Roman province.

As Joseph and his virgin bride

To David's house were both ally'd,

On this occasion they went down

To Bethlehem, the ancient town

From which the royal seat arose;

Where a great crowd of people goes:

And as the monarch gave command,

They register'd in order stand.

The time arriv'd when they were there,

Which all the fair when pregnant fear:

No room could any inn afford

For heaven's high King, creation's LORD,

Now to be born. The holy maid

Was in an homely stable laid,

Now her appointed time was run,

And there brought forth her heavenly son.*

But though the earth no honour gave

To heaven's great Prince, who came to save;

His

* It is generally allowed by chronologers, that Christ was born four years before the vulgar æra.

120 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

His happy birth the angels sing,
And joyful hail the new-born King.
Now night her sable mantle threw,
And Judah's hills had hid from view ;
When on the neighbouring mountain side
The shepherds all the night abide
Attentive to their fleecy care,
And scorn the chains of sleep to wear :
In midnight gloom the mountains lie,
Hush'd were the winds, and clear the sky ;
When sudden on their wondering sight
Darted a blaze of heavenly light :
An angel form the shepherds saw,
And shook around with trembling awe ;
When soon descends, on a bright cloud,
The heavenly youth, and cries aloud :
Banish your fears, ye favour'd swains !
Let gladness reign through Judah's plains ;
Glad tidings from the skies we bring !
Let Zion hail her new-born King !

At Bethlehem, this happy morn,
The long-predicted babe is born.
There the young prince, ordain'd to rise,
The Saviour sent you from the skies,
Now in a humble manger lies. }

While thus he spake, a flood of light
Immediate burst upon the sight,
And through the concave of the sky
Vaft crowds of burning seraphs fly ;
All heaven descends to earthly plains ;
And thus were heard their sacred strains :
Glory to God, ye seraphs, raise !
Let every harp resound his praise !
How bright in heaven his goodness shines !
How wonderful are his designs !
Let all the skies adore his plan
Of love and peace to fallen man !

Thus having sang, the heavenly train
The summit of the sky regain :

122 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

And when the morn restor'd the day,
The wondering shepherds take their way
To Bethlehem, with anxious mind,
And there the holy babe they find
New born, and in a manger laid,
Directly as the angel said.
The virgin mother wondering heard
How Heaven had in her cause appear'd;
And while their tale the shepherds told,
With wonder all the babe behold.
Then while their hearts with rapture burn
To their own flocks the swains return'd:
Loud strains of praise their lips proclaim,
And great MESSIAH was their theme.

HISTO

HISTORY THE FOURTH.

Christ presented in the Temple.

Luke, ch. ii.

THE eighth glad morn was seen to rise;
 The holy babe they circumcise;
 JESUS the wonderous child was nam'd,
 As e'er his birth by Heaven proclaim'd.
 And when the moon her round fulfill'd,
 They to the temple take the child:
 There with her infant in her hands
 The virgin by the altar stands;
 And, as the law commands it done,
 Presents her offering and her son:
 When with his spirit all on flame,
 Amongst the crowd old Simeon came;
 Who, highly favour'd by the sky,
 The Lord had shewn he should not die

Before the Saviour he beheld :

And now by heavenly power impell'd,

His aged arms the infant take,

And loud exulting thus he spake :

Lord, 'tis enough ! now let me die !

And join the praises of the sky.

True to thy promise thou hast been !

I have thy great salvation seen !

And thou, bless'd babe, ordain'd to rise

Bright as a star that decks the skies,

O'er heathen bands shalt shine confess'd,

And Israel shall in thee be bless'd.

While in the lofty temple stay'd

The infant, and the holy maid,

With eager steps, and ardent mind,

The general joy a matron join'd,

Who always to the temple came ;

And pious Anna was her name :

A prophetess advanc'd in age ;

And she, inspir'd with holy rage,

The mother and the child surveys
With loudest strains of lofty praise.

HISTORY THE FIFTH.

*The Offerings of the Eastern Sages : The Murder
of the Innocents : The Departure of the Holy
Family to Egypt, and their Return.*

Matt. ch. ii.

COnspicuous in the eastern skies,
While a long train of glories rise,
A star, like that which gilds the morn,
Proclaims the great MESSIAH born :
And soon a learned train repairs,
That read the language of the stars,
To Salem's towers ; and offerings bring,
Wishing to find the new-born king.
To Herod's court they all repair,
And make the great enquiry there :

5 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

ur pious zeal, they cry, pursues
mighty king born to the Jews ;
n our own country from afar
With joy we have beheld his star,
And come to worship : tell us where,
The royal babe is to appear.

Alarm'd the gloomy tyrant heard,
And for his falling crown he fear'd.
Grown old in murder and in blood,
His tottering throne but feebly stood :
One faithful friend he did not know,
But counted every man his foe ;
And in his wicked heart decreed
This babe, where'er he was, to bleed :
But hides his base design with care,
And speaks the eastern sages fair.
To the Sanhedrim * he applies,
To search the ancient prophecies,

* The great council of the Jews, consisting
of the chief priest, elders, and learned men.

Engraved for Fellow's Hist. of the Bible.



The Birth of Christ.



And give the certain knowledge where
The great MESSIAH should appear.

At Bethlehem, they all reply ;
Such is the language of the sky,
BY prophets taught. The monarch then
Sends the enquiring learned men,
Desiring, if their quest succeed, .
They to his court will send with speed ;
For if he once the child could view,
With pious zeal he'd worship too.

The eastern chiefs without delay
To Bethlehem pursue their way.
Immediate brightening all the skies,
The glorious star * was seen to rise ;
And leads the much rejoicing train
Over each hill, and vale, and plain ;

Then

This splendid appearance could be no other than a
meteor or globe of light in the atmosphere, for no fixed
star, planet, or comet could stand over any particular house,
town, country, or nation.

Then where the royal babe was laid,
Directly o'er the house it stay'd.
With joy the chiefs the child behold,
They offer frankincense and gold,
With various sorts of precious stores,
Which the rich east in plenty pours.
But they to Herod ne'er return ;
For so the will of Heaven they learn,
By vision taught. Then each regains
Their own rich mountains, and their plai
And joy in every bosom springs ;
For they had seen the King of kings !

Soon after this an angel came,
And stood by Joseph in a dream :
Joseph, he cry'd, without delay
The child and mother take away ;
Them both to distant Egypt bring,
Or Judah's hated tyrant king
The lovely infant will destroy.
The family directly fly

hills and each fair plain,
the land of Egypt gain,
in peace long time remain ;
aid his hated head
vile and worthless dead.
the tyrant, when he learn'd
the men had not return'd,
start from the land,
f his high command ;
cruelty decreed
le infant race to bleed,
two years old were found
m, and the country round.
the tyrant's aim
uffian soldiers came ;
their mothers' breasts they tore,
s streams ran infant gore.
geance seiz'd old Herod's breath,
e tyrant low in death ;

S

When

130 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

When from the skies an angel came,
And told good Joseph, in a dream,
That Israel's land he might explore,
For cruel Herod was no more.

With ready zeal the fire return'd;
But soon with great concern he learn'd,
That though the tyrant king was dead,
Now reign'd o'er Judah in his stead
His son Archelaus. † Full of fear,
The wary chief would not go there:
To Galilee he turn'd aside,
And would in Nazareth abide.

When, fixing in their first abode,
The pair brought up the Son of God;
Who subject to their rule remain'd,
Till he his thirtieth year had gain'd.

HISTOR

† As Herod Antipas, another of Herod's sons, had
government of Galilee, it must be supposed, that Archelaus
was noted for a disposition like his father, which was a
reason that Joseph was afraid to enter his kingdom.

HISTORY THE SIXTH.

is disputeth with the Doctors in the Temple.

Luke, ch. ii.

Now twice six times the circling sun
 Had through the winding zodiac run,
 Ce he beheld the happy morn
 Ben the great Prince of peace was born.
 Parents every rolling year
 great Jerusalem appear,
 Eat the passover, and praise
 God that measures out our days.
 Th them, all amiable and mild,
 ey now had brought the holy child.
 Ng as the rites require they stay,
 En joyful homeward take their way.
 E first day's journey they had run,
 Ben evening came they miss'd their son :

S a

They

138 HISTOR Y of the B I B L E

They search'd amongst their kindred ro
But yet the child could not be found :
Then back they tread the road with pa
And search'd through Salem ; but in va
Three days they sought ; and wonderin
Amongst a band of learned men,
In close debate on themes profound,
Within the temple's holy ground,
The much-admired child they found.
All wonder'd at his mighty mind :
He to his parents stood resign'd ;
And with them to their house proceeds,
Till call'd by Heaven to greater deeds.

HIST

HISTORY THE SEVENTH.

The Life, Preaching, and Death of John the Baptist.

Matt. ch. iii. Mark, ch. i. Luke, ch. iii.
John, ch. i.

NOW rapid time, with ceaseless speed,
 Had brought the days by Heaven decreed
To open the designs of grace
To man's rebellious fallen race:
When the eternal God inspires,
With holy zeal and heavenly fires,
His servant John. Long he abode
In private, and convers'd with God
In the lone desert; coarse his fare,
And contemplation all his care:
A camel's skin had wrapt him round,
And with a leathern girdle bound;

On

On Jordan's banks the holy man
The glorious work of God began.
Beneath the open azure skies,
With sacred zeal, he prophesies :
Thy God, O Israel, comes ! let all
In deep abasement prostrate fall :
Repent of each detested stain !
And hail the glories of his reign !
From every sin and folly turn ;
For like a fire his wrath will burn,
Consuming both the earth and skies,
As raging flame the chaff destroys.

The nation heard the heavenly strain,
Nor long the prophet preach'd in vain ;
Vast crowds attend the awful sound
From all the neighbouring regions round :
Confessing all their sins they came,
And were baptiz'd in Jordan's stream,
Which breaks on Enon's winding shores,
Or through rich Salem's pastures roars.

not, they heard the prophet say,
I am has wash'd your stains away ;
the new-baptiz'd attend,
their wicked ways amend.
Tree's root the ax is laid,
soon will fell the lofty shade :
pretence can save ; but all
fair not fruit shall surely fall.
ardent zeal the prophet tries
h the nation to be wise :
no priest or doctor car'd ;
he, howe'er exalted, spar'd :
cettuous king he boldly blam'd,
l his evil deeds proclaim'd ;
oy outrageous passion led,
e defil'd his brother's bed ;
> indulge his lawless flame,
is court detain'd the dame :
r his horrid love allows,
ould be thought his lawful spouse.

Three

136 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Three years the seer, by Heaven's command,
Repentance preach'd o'er all the land:
But if MESSIAH e'er was nam'd,
The glorious title he disclaim'd.
But as too plain his speech had been,
And rous'd the vengeance of the ♀ queen;

The

† This princess, whose name was Herodias, was daughter to Aristobulus, the son of Herod by Mariamne; who was put to death by the cruelty of his father. She was first married to Herod Philip, her uncle; but afterwards eloped from him, to marry Herod Antipas, the governor of Galilee, his brother; who being sharply reproved by John the Baptist, was so offended that he committed him to prison; but durst not put him to death, for fear of the people; till, on his birth-day, the daughter of Herodias having exceedingly pleased him by her dancing, he promised with an oath, to give her whatever she desired. The damsel, being instructed by her mother, demanded the head of John the Baptist; which was given her; the prophet being beheaded in prison.

The king, the haughty fair to please,
The man of GOD in prison lays :
And there the prophet must abide,
Till by her wicked arts he dy'd.

HISTORY THE EIGHTH.

Christ's Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation.

*Matt. ch. iii. & iv. Mark, ch. i. Luke,
ch. iii. & iv.*

WHEN three revolving years had ran,
Since the great Baptist first began
The work of GOD ; to Jordan's stream
Amongst the rest the Saviour came :
Baptismal rites he there demands :
The holy man reluctant stands ;
For not unknown to him drew nigh
The Son of GOD. And have not I,
In haste the prophet cry'd, more need
To be baptiz'd by thee ! Proceed

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In

138 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

In this I dare not. Christ replies,
With heavenly mildness in his eyes,
It is my mighty Father's will
That I all righteousness fulfil;
Then suffer it to be. The seer,
No longer touch'd by timorous fear,
To him, in Jordan's rolling wave,
The sacred rite directly gave.
The GOD, ascending from the flood,
On the green margin praying stood;
When down from the observing skies,
Dove-like, the Eternal Spirit flies;
And on his holy head appear'd,
While from on high these sounds were heard.
This is my well-beloved Son!
Well-pleas'd I view what he hath done!
He comes to take your sins away:
Hear, all ye nations, and obey!
To the lone desert, from the stream,
The Son of GOD, the Saviour came:

Deep in the bosom of the shade
He meditated, and he pray'd
Full forty days. But nature fails,
And raging hunger now prevails,
Old Satan the advantage takes,
And soon a furious onset makes :
In human form the fiend appear'd,
And thus his fraudulent voice was heard :
Art thou the Son of God indeed !
And of provisions stand in need !
If thou art Heaven's almighty Lord,
All nature will obey thy word :
Then change at once these stones to bread,
And let both thee and I be fed.
The Son of God through his disguise
The fiend well knew ; and thus replies :
The God that o'er creation reigns,
The numerous race of man sustains
By such provisions, and such means

As

As his own will prescribes. 'Tis known,

Man does not live by bread alone;

But manna, * if it please the L O R D :

So is it written in his word.

The baffled fiend his power still tries;

And with the great Redeemer flies

To where the temple's turrets rise.

The pinnacle, aloft in air,

He makes his choice, and sets him there:

Now if thy claim be just, he cries,

This giddy height thou may'st despise;

And, sure to win great Judah's crown,

In open view thyself cast down:

If thou art Heaven's eternal heir,

Not this great fall can be thy fear;

For God, whose word is sure, hath said,

He'll send his angels to thy aid;

Thou to all hurt shalt stand unknown,

Nor dash thy foot against a stone.

The

* Deut. viii. 3.

Son of God the tempter ey'd
th full disdain, and thus reply'd:
ough Satan now would fain be wise,
written word against him lies;
no presumptuous paths be trod;
ou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God!
is his word. The wily fiend,
ough twice repuls'd, as yet disdain'd
yield the victory won. Then takes
a great Redeemer up, and makes
a yast mountain, on the crown
sets the sacred burden down.
n by his bold delusive powers
brings vast cities, temples, towers,
d all the glorious glittering things
iich wait on empires, and on kings,
l on the sight; all round they lie,
d swell upon the wandering eye:
fill the heart the whole combines,
d all the gaudy landscape shines.

142 HISTOR Y of the B I B L E,

All this, the dæmon cries, is mine,
And by my gift it shall be thine :
If o'er the earth's extended plain
It be thy noble choice to reign,
Fall down and worship me. And shall,
The Saviour cry'd, I floop to fall
And worship Satan ! when the L O R D
Hath taught his people by his word,
No impious idol gods to own ;
But worship him, and him alone.
Thou and thy wiles are all disdain'd !
Then get thee back to hell, thou fiend !
Away the vanish'd tempter sneaks,
And soon uncommon glory breaks.
From a bright cloud : and then descends
A flight of cherubs, which attends
On the exalted King of kings,
And heavenly food in plenty brings.

HISTOR Y

HISTORY THE NINTH.

*Life, Doctrine, and Miracles of Christ, from
the Beginning of his public Ministry, * to the
first Passover.*

Collected from the Four Evangelists.

WHEN from the cheerful eyes of day
Conceal'd the noble Baptist lay,
Cause to blame the king he dar'd,
Or vice, though on a throne, had spar'd;
The Son of God, by Heaven rever'd,
In the great work himself appear'd.
By power divine he wonders wrought,
The will of God sublimely taught:

From

* The opening of the glorious Gospel was carried on about three years and a half under the ministry of John the Baptist, who being at that time cast into prison, Christ himself continued it for three years and a half more, till the time of his crucifixion.

PRIDEAUX.

From every vice and folly draws,
 And firm in truth and virtue's cause,
 Unmov'd he stood, both day and night,
 Brought immortality to light ;
 Then to secure eternal joys
 To all his faithful followers, dies.

Beyond great Judah's noted tide
 The Baptist saw the L O R D , and cry'd,
 Behold the Lamb of G o d ! This heard
 Enquiring Peter, and appear'd
 With pious Andrew. They were join'd,
 With eager steps and ardent mind,
 By Philip and Nathanael. All
 With joy on the Redeemer call,
 As G o d 's high Son, and Israel's king,
 Who great salvation came to bring.

At Cana was a marriage feast ;
 The mother of the L O R D was guest :
 Jesus with his disciples join ;
 But e'er 'twas o'er they wanted wine.

Mary

ary the case before him laid,
d bids them do whate'er he said.
e servants eyes were fix'd on him ;
bids them fill up to the brim
ith water clear, six large stone jars :
ey fill, and draw ; a servant bears
ick to the ruler of the feast,
o soon declares this wine the best.
>thing was known, and all admir'd ;
th full belief his train retir'd.
hen to Capernaum goes the L O R D ,
l there he preach'd the heavenly word ;
h ardent zeal the people taught,
l wonderous works amongst them wrought :
soon to Zion takes his way,
re to attend the solemn day
en they paschal feast prepar'd,
which the nation yearly shar'd.
re when his angry eye survey'd
people carrying on their trade
ol. IV. U Within

Within the temple's sacred walls,
 With a small whip he on them falls ;
 Drives all before him as he goes,
 And all their tables overthrows.

Then in the city he proceeds
 To miracles and mighty deeds.

To him a learned doctor came ;
 And Nicodemus was his name :
 But came by night, disgrace to shun,
 And to the LORD his language run :
 Thou art a teacher sent from heaven ;
 For not to common men is given
 To work such wonders. Christ replies,
 To heavenly glories none can rise
 Except they're born again. The chief
 Concludes this doctrine past belief,
 So strange it seems. The LORD rejoins,
 While in his face fresh glory shines,
 That all must be, who to him turn,
 Of water and the spirit born.

The heavenly teacher then declares,
While the learn'd scribe with wonder hears,
That as the serpent high appear'd,
Which Moses in the desert rear'd,
So must the Son of God on high
To save the men that own him die ;
And who believes, and loves his ways,
He will to life eternal raise.

HISTORY THE TENTII.

The Life, Doctrine, and Miracles of Christ continued, from the First to the Second Passover after the Commencement of his public Ministry.

Collected from the Four Evangelists,

NOW Christ and his disciples came
To sacred Jordan's swelling stream :
There, while the rapid current rolls,
He spread abroad the food for souls ;

148 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

And those who by his words abide
Baptizes * in the flowing tide.

Prodigious crowds each day appear,
And press about the Saviour there.

Then fam'd for his immortal deeds,
To Galilee he soon proceeds.

His way lies through Samaria's plains,

Whose hatred to the Jews remains;

And, while the noon's bright splendors blaze,

Near Shechem's ancient town he stays:

And there with weariness oppress'd

At Jacob's well he sits to rest.

A woman soon approach'd to draw,

Whom when the great Redeemer saw,

He asks to drink: and then succeeds

A short discourse, when Christ proceeds

To inform the fair, that God most high

To all true worshippers is nigh:

To

* Christ baptized not himself, but by his disciples.

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 149.

To every prayer his ear he'll bend ;
And nations need no more contend
About the place where heaven's high LORD
Will his most holy name record.

The Saviour farther to the fair
Proceeds his mission to declare ;
And mentions her most secret deeds,
To which her full belief succeeds.
She tells the townsmen : they believe,
And with glad hearts the truth receive ;
Invite the LORD : and two full days
With them at Shechem JESUS stays.

To Nazareth then proceeds the LORD,
There boldly preach'd the heavenly word ;
And plainly to himself applies
Part of Isaiah's prophecies.
Though they admire his manly sense,
His meanness gives them vast offence :
Who is this man, they jointly cry !
What is he more than you or I !

His

150 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

His parents and his trade we know,

Why should he be exalted so!

With gentle blame the LORD replies,

That their objection is not wise:

No prophet that e'er yet appear'd

Was in his native place rever'd.

Enrag'd the townsmen rise, and cry,

That he for this deserves to die:

Then lead him to the mountain's crown,

With full design to throw him down:

But, over-aw'd by power divine,

They quickly drop the base design:

Forth from the crowd the Saviour goes,

Not one amongst them dare oppose.

From thence to Cana Christ proceeds,

And marks his way with mighty deeds.

A nobleman of wealth and fame

To him from fair Capernaum came;

For

For his sick son he of the Lord,
 In humble strain, a cure implor'd.
 }
 This moment is thy son restor'd,
 Depart in peace! the Lord return'd:
 He goes, and soon the truth he learn'd;
 A servant came the news to tell,
 That from that hour his son was well.

New to the margin of the main *
 Descends the Saviour with his train;
 And divers there his eye survey'd,
 Attending on their fishing trade.
 Simon and Andrew called he;
 And the two sons of Zebedee.
 Attentive to the heavenly call,
 They leave their work, and follow all.

Christ

* The sea or lake so often mentioned in the Evangelists,
 was the sea of Tiberias; or, which is the same, the lake of
 Gennesareth; which, according to Josephus, was 100 fur-
 longs in length and 40 wide.

Christ to Capernaum takes his way;
 And preaching on the sabbath day,
 A man appear'd amongst the rest
 That by a daemon was possest.
 The fiend cry'd out, Let us alone!
 Thou art by all our legions known;
 Jesus of Nazareth, each one knows;
 We dare not thy command oppose,
 But jointly tremble at thy nod;
 Thou art the Holy One of God!
 Then hold thy peace, the Saviour said,
 And leave the man! The fiend obey'd.
 Then cry'd the crowd in wild amaze,
 What power is this which hell obeys!

To Peter's house the Saviour went,
 Whose mother all her friends lament:
 A burning fever she sustains,
 And fast the dire distemper gains:
 They seek the Lord; their suit he hears:
 The fever instant disappears,

buk'd by him. The matron rose,
d to her usual business goes.
l o'er the country spread his fame ;
e sick, and the diseased came.
natever miseries they endure,
ey by his word receive a cure.
word none dare to disobey ;
devils howl, and leave their prey.
hen to the desert he repairs,
spreads before the Lord his prayers.
en found, the multitude in vain
great Redeemer would detain.
various cities he proceeds,
there performs immortal deeds :
friend of all mankind he stood,
spent his days in doing good.
gain he to Capernaum came,
ich sounded forth his former fame.
pressing crowd with pain he bore ;
soon retreated to the shore

154 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Of the Salt Lake. A ship he takes,
And from the deck a sermon makes :
(The ship was Peter's) when he ceas'd,
The L ORD the owner thus address'd :
Put out to sea, and for a draught
Let down your net. They did ; and caugl
Fish in such numbers, from the main,
As two fair ships could scarce contain.

The sea-beat shore the Saviour leaves ;
And in the city succour gives
To a poor leper, who apply'd,
L ORD, thou canst make me clean ! he cry'd
The Son of G OD with pity heard ;
The leprosy no more appear'd,
But from his touch immediate flies.
Then one was brought that helpless lies,
By a dead palsy long confin'd ;
To make him way the servants join'd :
But such vast crowds the L ORD surround,
His earnest friends no method found.

To bring him near. Access to gain,
On the house-top ascend the train ;
The roof untile ; and from the crown
They let the paralytic down.
The Lord well-pleas'd the deed surveys,
They sins are all forgiven ! he says.
The haughty scribes and pharisees
Then charge the Lord with blasphemies.
Christ let them know, when men believe
Their Saviour can their sins forgive.
Take up thy bed, and go thy way !
They hear him to the lame man say :
Then at the word behold him rise ;
And Israel's God he glorifies.
The Roman tribute to receive,
Which all the Jews reluctant give,
Sat Matthew at the appointed place.
Jesus, with kindness in his face,
Beheld ; and, Follow me, he said,
The publican the Lord obey'd.

156 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

With ready heart his train he join'd,
And left his cash and books behind.

HISTORY THE ELEVENTH.

The Life, Doctrine, and Miracles of Christ con-
tinued from the Second to the Third Passover —
after the Commencement of his public Ministry. —

Collected from the Four Evangelists.

THEN Jesus rose to Zion's towers,
Where the assembled nation pours
To the passover's annual feast;
And there he succours the distress'd.

Soon to Bethesda's pool he goes;
And there his God-like mercy shews
To a poor cripple, who appears
To have been lame near forty years.
Take up thy bed, and walk! then says
The Son of God: the man obeys;

Takes up his bed, and through the streets
The burden bears. But soon he meets
The angry Jews ; and this their strain,
How dar'st thou boldly thus profane
The sabbath-day ! The man, he said,
That cur'd me, bid me bear my bed.
Who is that man ? they fierce enquir'd ;
But Jesus had e'er this retir'd.
At length 'twas known : and then they cry,
That justly he deserves to die :
And him with hatred they regard,
Because he had himself declar'd
The Son of God. Then through the fields,
While Judah's land its harvest yields,
The L O R D proceeds with all his train,
And nodding bends the yellow grain.
Twas on the sacred sabbath-day,
And as they went along the way,
The ears they pluck, the corn they eat,
And share well-pleas'd the rural treat.

258. HISTORY of the BIBLE.

The pharisees aloud complain,
That they the sabbath-day profane.
Jesus replies, and gives the word,
That of the sabbath he is LORD.

Then to Capernaum, high in fame,
He the succeeding sabbath came.
The synagogue his train revere,
And join the sacred worship there.
Amongst the rest was seen to stand
A cripple with a wither'd hand ;
The LORD dispels the dire disease.
The pharisees a tumult raise.
The fierce Herodians join the cry,
And doom the Son of God to die.

To the sea coast the LORD retir'd :
The multitude his deeds admir'd :
Prodigious crowds attend him there,
His works to see, and words to hear.
The press to shun, without delay
He left the shore, and cross'd the sea.

To

To a bleak mountain he repairs,
And spends the night in fervent prayers,
Alone retir'd. When morning rose,
He down to his disciples goes;
And from the number, twelve he chose
Apostles; in commission join'd,
To preach his name to all mankind.
Then standing on the mountain side,
(The crowd below extended wide)
In a sublime, immortal strain
He then proceeded to explain
His moral precepts; and displays
Those God-like virtues, which will raise
And dignify the Christian name.
Not to destroy the law he came,
But to establish, and enforce.
And in his wonderful discourse
He meekness, justice, goodness taught,
Repentance true for every fault;

160 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Fair mercy with her noble train;

And purity that knows no stain;

Firm fortitude life's ills to bear;

Contentment, that subdues all care

By resignation and by prayer.

And to such heights his precepts rose,

He teaches us to love our foes.

With such simplicity and force

Our LORD continued his discourse;

The wondering crowd upon him gaz'd,

At once confounded and amaz'd.

Soon as he ceas'd, a leper pray'd

His kind compassion, and his aid.

His dreadful case the LORD attends,

And cleansed to the priest he sends.

Christ to Capernaum takes his way:

There a centurion comes, to pray,

If on the LORD he may prevail

To come, and his sick servant heal.

}

The

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 161

¶ LORD consents: but e'er he goes,
Lively faith the Gentile shews:
¶ not worthy, LORD, I know,
at thou towards my house should'st go:
nature subject is to thee;
¶ ak but the word, and it shall be!
¶ pake the chief: the LORD approv'd;
¶ the complaint at once remov'd.
¶ o Nain then the LORD proceeds,
¶ marks his way with greater deeds.
near the city on the plain
Proach'd a long and mournful train:
widow's only son and heir,
the cold grave they weeping bear.
¶ mother, overpower'd with woes,
all the depth of sorrow goes.
¶ LORD with pity saw her tears,
¶ with kind words the mourner chears:
¶ p not! he cry'd: then touch'd the dead;
¶ bier stood still, and loud he said:

Young man, I say to thee, arise!

The youth reviv'd, and fix'd his eyes

Full on the LORd. When this was done,

He to the dame restor'd her son.

Then Jesus to the city goes.

To him one Simon kindness shews:

And sitting in his house at meat,

While the glad host prolong'd the treat,

One that was known a wanton fair,

Wip'd Jesus' feet dry with her hair,

She first had wash'd them with her tears.

Surpriz'd the pharisee appears,

That Christ should let her make so free.

To this the LORd replies, that she

Feels such repentance and such loye,

As all that know must needs approve:

Then tells her, she's belov'd by heaven,

And has her numerous sins forgiven.

While mighty crowds the LORd surround
He was by his relations found.

Br

so prodigious was the pres,
him they could not gain access.
way of life they jointly blame;
take him with them home, they came,
en some of those who stood more near,
rm'd him that his friends were there.
y are my friends, the LOR D declar'd,
whom my words are gladly heard:
I him with love my eye surveys,
o best my Father's will obeys,
hen by his power the LOR D redress'd
that a dæmon had posses'd,
h blind and dumb. With envious eye
pharisees behold, and cry,
s by Satan's power, no doubt,
it thus he casts the devils out.
ign they ask: the LOR D of heaven
clares, no sign shall now be given,
that of Jonas; when he lay
ee days beneath the rolling sea.

Thus under earth the Saviour lies
Three days, and then shall glorious rise.
The sea-beat shore the Saviour sought :
There in a ship he sat, and taught.
And shew'd, in parabolic * strain,
MESSIAH's kingdom, and his reign.
At night he cross'd the foamy sea,
And sleeping in the vessel lay ;
While the rough winds, and roaring tide
The ship, half sinking, scarce abides.
In deep distress the LOR D they wake :
He rose : and to the winds he spake.
The winds and waves his voice obey ;
Clear were the skies, and calm the sea.
Arriving on the other shore,
His presence makes the devils roar.

* The parables which Christ proposed at this time
That of the sower : That of the candle put under a
That of the tares of the field : That of the grain of a
seed : and, That of the leaven. Matt. xiii.

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 163

Two men, amongst the tombs, they find,
So fierce no cord or chain could bind.

One by a legion was possess'd:
To Jesus they their suit address'd,
That they might not be sent to dwell
In the dark deep abyss of hell;
But as along the mountain side
A numerous herd of swine they spy'd,
The devils humbly begg'd, that when
They were oblig'd to leave the men,
The Lord would to their wish incline,
And let them all possess the swine.

Jesus consents: and at his word
The devils enter'd in the herd.
Strange madness seiz'd the bristly train,
Who toss, and foam, and rage. In vain
Their keepers strive to rule them. Down
Impetuous from the mountain's crown,
They with blind fury drive away,
And all were drowned in the sea.

The

166 HISTORY of the BIBLE,

The foolish owners of the herd,
Their swine before their souls prefer'd ;
Before the L ORD submissive stand,
And humbly beg he'll leave the land,

The great Redeemer cross'd the sea,
And to Capernaum took his way.

Jarius, a ruler of the Jews,
With his request the L ORD pursues,
And begs his mighty power to save
His only daughter from the grave.

Jesus consents : and as he goes,
An aged woman touch'd his cloaths :

A cure she found. But soon was sped
A message, that the maid was dead,
From Jairus' house. There Jesus went :
Not long the father need lament.

From death's cold arms the maid he rais'd ;
The joyful sire JEHOVAH prais'd.

To Nazareth then proceeds the L ORD :
And was by two blind men implor'd

To

To give them sight : Their fuit he heard,
 And to their view the plains appear'd.
 Then one by a foul fiend possess'd,
 Was by his mighty power redress'd :
 And o'er the land he sends his train,
 To preach MESSIAH, and his reign.

Prodigious crowds the Land inclose ; }
 Where'er he stays, where'er he goes. }
 When to enjoy some short repose,
 He with his servants cross'd the sea,
 And to the desert took his way.
 There on a mountain's shaggy side
 A while the heavenly train abide.
 The multitude this understand,
 They take a compass round by land ;
 And e'er the sun plung'd in the main,
 The mountain's foot great numbers gain.
 Jesus descends, himself reveals,
 Then the diseas'd amongst them heals.

And

168 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

And while the day's bright splendors burn,
His servants urg'd them to return.

Give them to eat, the LOR D commands ;

When each disciple wondering stands.

Where shall we find, they cry'd, the bread
With which these thousands must be fed !

Five little loaves is all we have,

With two small fishes. Jesus gave

The multitude command to sit :

The bread he brake himself : and it

The twelve apostles carried round.

Five thousand eat, and plenty found.

And twelve large baskets scarce contain

The scatter'd fragments that remain.

The multitude, with grateful heart,

Were not contented to depart :

But Jesus they propos'd to bring,

And at the town proclaim him king.

Jesus refus'd the name to take.

But bids his followers cross the lake.

He to the mountain will repair,
And spend the night in fervent prayer.
Then the disciples take their way
Without the **L**ORD, and put to sea :
The wind, contrary on the main,
But one poor league all night they gain.
When morning rose, with trembling awe
And wild surprize the sailors saw
A man come walking on the sea,
And to their vessel take his way.
Jesus approach'd to chase their fear,
And lets them know himself was there.
Peter rejoic'd his **L**ORD to see :
O let me come and walk with thee,
Was his petition. With consent
He down into the water went.
Some time he walk'd : but when he spies
The mighty billows round him rise,
His courage fail'd him, and he cries,

279 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

As fast he sinks, Oh save me, LORD!
Jesus approaches at the word,
And takes his hand. Then from the main
The ship's high deck they jointly gain.
Swift as the wind she cleaves the sea,
And at her destin'd port she lay.

The multitude the knowledge gain'd,
That Jesus had behind remain'd,
When the disciples put to sea.
And when the morn restor'd the day,
They pour along the mountain side :
Where can the Master be, they cry'd!
At length the wonderous news they gain,
That he was seen beyond the main :
They follow. Soon the LORD they found,
With shouts of joy they him surround :
In vast surprize they all appear ;
Master, they cry, how cam'st thou here!
The LORD replies, they round him spread
Only because he gave them bread,

When

When heavenly food was more their need ;
And that his flesh was meat indeed.
When thus the LORD was heard to say,
Great numbers murmuring went away.

HISTORY THE TWELFTH.

The Life, Doctrine, and Miracles of Christ continued, from the Third Passover after the Commencement of his public Ministry, to his being apprehended by the treachery of Judas.

Collected from the Four Evangelists.

NOW to soft Sidon's sea-beat shores,
Descending from great Salem's towers,
The Son of GOD, the Saviour came :
To him approach'd a mournful dame,
Whose daughter grievous ills sustains ;
An envious dæmon caus'd her pains.

2 HISTOR Y. of the B I B L E.

christ to her suit will not reply :

his followers, wearied with her cry,
Besought; but heard the L O R D declare,
That only Israel was his care..

But, ardent in her daughter's cause,.
The anxious parent not withdraws..
To her the great Redeemer said,
I must not take the children's bread,
And give to dogs.. The dame replies ;
L O R D, I confess thy words are wise !.
Yet oft the dog devoureth all
The crumbs which from the table fall..
Great is thy faith ! reply'd the L O R D,
And heal'd her daughter with a word.

By Jordan's springs Christ took his way,
And fetch'd a compass round the sea :
Where one both deaf and dumb appear'd ;
Soon by almighty power he heard
And spake. The Saviour rose ;
And up a mountain's side he goes,

Where on the crown three days abode,
Alone retir'd, the Son of God.
When from the height he took his way,
Vast numbers of sick people lay,
The lofty mountain's foot around :
His heavenly mercy there they found :
Whate'er their sickness or their pain,
Immediate relief they gain.
But, as the multitude had stay'd
Three days to wait the Saviour's aid,
The Lord to his disciples said,
They should not go till they were fed.
Then soon they their provisions spread ;
Seven loaves were all. And these they take,
The Saviour first gave thanks, and brake :
The multitude, spread far and wide,
Sat down along the mountain side :
With joy the rural treat they share ;
Four thousand eat, and none need spare.

Then

Then Jesus cross'd the foaming sea,
 And to Magdala took his way.
 The pharisees against him join,
 And in derision ask a sign.

Can ye with skill, the Lord replies,
 Observe the clouds and read the skies,
 And yet so ignorant remain
 When great MESSIAH was to reign !
 No sign this wicked race shall gain'
 But that of Jonas, when he lay
 Three days beneath the swelling sea.

Then Jesus to Bethsaida steer'd,
 And when a poor blind man appear'd,
 Restor'd his sight. The multitude
 With wild amaze his wonders view'd ;
 And various notions form'd : One said,
 This prophet's risen from the dead ;
 Another that : In Herod's eyes
 None was so likely thus to rise.

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 175

As John the Baptist. But the Lord
By his disciples stood ador'd
As CHRIST the Son of God. Their view
His rising empire would pursue.
They thought he'd David's sceptre gain,
And over all the nations reign :
In every heart, in every mind,
So bright the great idea shin'd,
That tho' the Lord with frequent care
trove for his sufferings to prepare ;
And let them know to him remain'd,
By the eternal God ordain'd,
Contempt and scorn ; and last to die ;
They from the thought abhorrent fly.
And, sure he will the throne ascend,
Who shall be greatest they contend.

Great Tabor's top the Lord ascends,
There Peter on his steps attends,
With James and John. Soon on their sight
Darted a blaze of heavenly light:

Bright

176 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Bright as the beauteous beams of day,
With garments white and pure as they,
The Saviour was beheld to shine,
In dazzling lustre all divine.

To him two heavenly forms descend,
And hold discourse as with a friend ;
For Moses and Elijah known ;
And bright in glittering robes they shone.

Of things to come their converse ran,
And heaven's designs of love to man ;
The Saviour, whom the Jews despise,
Ordain'd to die ; and then to rise ;

Peter, elate, was heard to say,
Lord, let us here for ever stay !

These heavenly guests with joy we see ;
And houses build for them and thee.

While thus he spake, from a bright cloud
An awful voice thus calls aloud :
Mortals, attend ! to you is given,
The Son of God, the heir of heaven !

Well-pleas'd, I all his deeds survey,
 Hear him, ye nations ! and obey.
 These sounds the three disciples hear
 With trembling awe and shivering fear :
 And then before the Lord of all,
 They on their faces prostrate fall.
 The Lord beheld their deep dismay,
 And gently touch'd them as they lay :
 At once the heavenly scene withdrew ;
 Jesus alone appeared in view,
 In his own form. Then from the crown
 Of lofty Tabor they go down.

Not far remote they quickly find
 Other disciples, who had join'd
 In their Lord's absence to expel
 One of the horrid train of hell.
 Them the fierce dæmon had withstood ;
 Nor could they do the young man good.
 The anxious father saw the Lord,
 And humbly now his help implor'd ;

With his request the LORD complies,
The youth's restor'd, the devil flies.

Christ having preach'd through Galil
Goes to Capernaum near the sea.
The gatherers of the tribute came ;
And Peter urg'd to pay the same.
The good man, by his LORD's command
Goes with his tackle to the strand ;
Cast in his line, and with his hook,
A scaly fish directly took ;
Its mouth he open'd, and survey'd
The money which the tribute paid.

An annual feast* to Zion's walls
The whole assembled nation calls.
Jesus intending to go there,
And at the sacred feast appear,
His way thro' fair Samaria lies ;
Which to receive the LORD denies :

* The feast of Pentecost, celebrated fifty days
Passover.

of hatred to the Jews,
friendly office they refuse.
their refusal and disdain
the griev'd disciples loud complain.
Let us, the whole assembly cries,
Invoke the vengeance of the skies,
To wrap the country round in fire ;
And let the churlish race expire.
The LORD their angry spirit blames,
And heaven's rich mercy then proclaims ;
Whose love the great Redeemer gave,
Not to destroy men's lives, but save.

The LORD and his disciple train
Two pious sisters entertain
At Bethany. A noble feast
They make for such a worthy guest.
Martha with hurrying, anxious cares,
And liberal hand the treat prepares.
But Mary, as she lov'd the LORD,
Sat at his feet, and heard his word.

180. HISTORY of the BIBLE.

To him griev'd Martha loud complains,

That she alone the toil sustains.

To her complaint the LORD replies,

That Mary's conduct is more wise :

For she, with worthy zeal, pursues

That better part she ne'er can lose.

The sacred feast Christ having shar'd,

He to Capernaum then repair'd :

Where, on the sabbath-day, he cur'd

One that a dropsy long endur'd :

And made it plainly understood,

'Tis always lawful to do good.

To Galilee's small towns he goes,

Where free his noble doctrine flows ;

And shews that self must be deny'd

By all that in the truth abide.

Christ to Jerusalem returns.*

His coming all the city learns :

* The Redeemer went to Jerusalem at this time to the feast of Tabernacles, celebrated the thirteenth of October.

~~and~~ crowds surround him, and admire
his noble eloquence and fire.

about him strange conjectures rise ;
some honour him, and some despise.

The pharisees in concert join,
And to detain him now design.

Their messengers astonished stand,
Nor can fulfil the base command.

They hear him ; but they dare not take :
For never mortal like him spake.

Then, while he in the temple taught,
Cover'd with shame, a fair was brought,
That could illicit love allow,
And late had broke her marriage vow.

Moses commands, they jointly cry,
That every vile adulteress die ;
But, ere the deadly cast be thrown,
We judge it right thy will be known.
Wanting the Saviour to accuse,
This question put the spiteful Jews.

Jesus,

182 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Jesus, their malice to confound,
Stoop'd down : and writing on the ground
Made no reply. At length he rose :
Let him, he cry'd, that at her throws
From this great crime be clear. Then they
Being self-condemned, all sneak away.
The woman stood when all retir'd.

Art thou condemn'd ? the LORD enquir'd.
She answer'd, no. The GOD replies,
With heavenly mildness in his eyes,
I not condemn thee, but restore ;
Then go thy ways, and sin no more.

A man that ne'er had seen the light,
Next day the Saviour blefs'd with sight.
This person was through Salem known,
And now with vast amazement shewn.
Great was the noise through all the town :
The pharisees upon him frown.
The man and his glad parents too,
Boldly declare the cure is true.

By heavenly goodness thus restor'd,
He prais'd the goodness of the LORD.

To Galilee the LORD retir'd;

But as his piety desir'd
To keep the feast, * he with his train
To Zion's towers returns again.

Now through Samaria's towns he goes;
And there his God-like goodness shews.
Ten leprous men at once drew nigh,

And loudly all for mercy cry.

Go to the priest without delay,
They gladly heard the Saviour say,
And all are heal'd while on the way.

With glad surprize their cure they learn'd;
Yet of the ten but one return'd
To thank the LORD for such rich grace;
And of Samaria was his race.

Then

* The feast of Dedication, celebrated the 15th of December.

Then cross great Jordan's swelling stream
From Salem's walls, the Saviour came.
And while he in these parts remain'd,
From Bethany he knowledge gain'd,
That seiz'd with sickness Lazarus * lies,
And without heavenly aid he dies.
Not unto death, then Christ replies,
This sickness is : but that the L ORD
May be exalted and ador'd.
Jesus two days thought fit to stay :
To Bethany then took his way.
But death had made the youth his prey,
Before the L ORD of life appear'd ;
And lamentation loud was heard.
The house of mourning he attends ;
His tears he mixes with his friends.
Then Martha to the Saviour cry'd,
Hadst thou been here he had not dy'd.

* Lazarus was brother to Mary and Martha, the s that entertained the L ORD at Bethany.

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 185

Chase her sorrows, Jesus then
forms her, he shall rise again.
On to the grave he asks to go : .
There they proceed in silent woe.
Our days in death had Lazarus lay.
Christ bids them roll the stone away.
Lazarus, come forth ! he loudly cries ;
Then the dead man was seen to rise :
Is former strength and vigour knows,
And joyful with them home he goes.
Soon to Jerusalem proceed
The tidings of the wonderous deed.
And the astonish'd rulers all
Immediately a counsel call ;
which the vile and cruel band
The Saviour's instant death ordain'd.
The LORD well knew their wicked aim,
And to the banks of Jordan came :
But soon return'd their rage to stand.
The passover was near at hand,

At which it was by heaven decreed,
The Saviour of mankind should bleed.

Through Jericho then Jesus goes ;
Where a blind man his goodness knows.
Zaccheus * fain the Lord would see :
He runs before, and climbs a tree.
Then Jesus calls to him by name,
And to his house the Saviour came.

Jesus departs, and on the plains
Blind Bartimeus favour gains.
Christ soon at Bethany appears,
The little town the Lord reveres ;
And, when at meat, lov'd Mary shed
A box of ointment on his head.

The

* A publican (that is, a collector of the Roman taxes) which dwelt at Jericho. The Pharisees were much offended at Jesus eating with the publicans, who were odious to the Jews, on account of their office, and the Lord, on this occasion, laid before them the parable of the prodigal son.

The vast expence, false Judas blames,
The Lord the fair one's love proclaims ;
Applauds the deed, and makes it known,
That for his burial this was done.

Soon as the morn restor'd the day,
Jesus to Zion takes his way.

Now the exalted Son of God,
On a young ass in triumph rode.
By heaven inspir'd, the joyful crowd,
Threw down their cloaths, and roar'd aloud :
Hosannah to king David's son !

He comes to take his father's throne !

Amidst the shouts of loud acclaim,

The Saviour to the temple came.

He drives the traders out, and cures

The blind and lame, or who endures

Disease or sickness. Full of joy,

Hosannah still the people cry.

The Pharisees their conduct blame,

But Jesus vindicates the same :

188 HISTOR Y of the B I B L E.

For, did not these the silence break,
The stones that pave the streets would spe

All day the L ORD at Salem stay'd,
But ere the night had thrown her shade,
At Bethany his friends he joins,
Whence he returns when morning shines :
Being hungry, the great Son of Gon,
Saw a fair fig-tree on the road.

Large were the boughs, the leaves were gi
But when approach'd, no fruit was feen.
Then thus the L ORD address'd the tree,
Let fruit no more be found on thee !
The leaves all wither'd at the sound,
And root stood perish'd in the ground,

Then Jesu to the temple went,
Where various Jews with base intent,
Propose their questions. Christ's replies
Discover him supremely wise.

In parabolic * stile he shews
Their sad rejection, and their woes.—
And when his train, with wondering eyes,
Behold the temple's turrets rise ;
While the vast building they survey'd,
This soon will be in ruin laid,
Reply'd the LORD. I plainly spy
The bitter day of vengeance nigh,
Which will this wicked town destroy.
While dreadful war upon her falls,
Faction will rage within her walls ;
And wrap't in slaughter, blood and fire,
Her faithless sons will all expire.
Then this prodigious pile will fall,
And one wide ruin swallow all.—

The LORD, with constant tender care,
Strove his disciples to prepare

For

* The parables our LORD addressed on this occasion, were the parable of the keepers of the vineyard; of the ten virgins; of the king's son, and the talents.

190 HISTORY of the B I B L E.

For their vast sorrows which drew nigh,
And would produce their future joy.

Their duty he before them lays,
Directs their conduct, for them prays ;
A comforter he says he'll send,
And will their every want attend.
The passover with them he'll share,
And sends a servant to prepare.

The Jews had now his death decreed,
But doubted how they should proceed ;
They durst not apprehend the L O R D ,
Because the people lov'd his word.
When in the temple he appear'd,
A tumult in his cause was fear'd ;
Till by a bribe, false Judas they
Had hir'd his master to betray,
By night, when all was still. The L O R D ,
According to his former word,
With his disciples deign'd to eat
The passover. And while at meat,

He

He to the twelve apostles said,
That he, that night, should be betray'd
By one that at the table sat.
This the disciples wonder'd at ;
And soon griev'd Peter made reply,
Tho' all forsake thee, ne'er will I !
Thy strength, O Peter, Christ reply'd,
Will prove but weakness, when 'tis try'd ; }
I shall by thee be thrice deny'd,
Before the cock crow twice. Then brake }
He bread, and bids them all partake,
After he bles'd. In love they join ;
When Jesus pour'd the ruddy wine,
Gave thanks, and gave them all to drink,
He bid them of their master think.
After his death repeat the same,
Whenever they together came ;
And let this feast be understood,
An emblem of his flesh and blood.

Then,

392 HISTORY of the BIBLE

Then, having sang an hymn of praise,
The L^{ORD} in town no longer stays ;
The mount of Olives he ascends,
And on him his lov'd train attends.

A village on the mountain side,
Stood with small houses scatter'd wide,
Gethsemane its name. And here
By night the holy train appear.

A garden now their steps exlore,
Where oft the L^{ORD} had been before.
He bids his lov'd apostles stay,
While he at distance goes to pray :

And tells them floods of sorrows roll
Incessant on his righteous soul.

To a small distance then he goes,
On the cold ground himself he throws,
O'erwhelm'd with terrors and with woes.
And while he to his Father pray'd,
Such agonies his soul invade ;

He sweat great drops of blood. The Lord
In this deep anguish stood ador'd
BY heaven's bright sons; and from the skies,
To comfort him an angel flies.

Mean while from Salem's guilty towers,
An armed force with Judas pours.
They had upon a sign agreed,
And on the business now proceeded,
To them the impious traitor spake,
 I'll kiss the man that you must take.
And now, while torches light supply'd,
They march along the mountain side.
Soon at the garden they appear,
 Judas before had oft been there.
He with a kiss approach'd the Lord,
And, Hail! my master, was his word.
The Saviour calm reply'd: and is
It Judas, with a treacherous kiss
That thou betrayest me! Then he goes,
Full in the face of all his foes;

And ask'd them whom they saught. They cry
Jesus of Nazareth ! Then I
Am he ye seek ; reply'd the L O R D .
They all fall backward at the word.
But recollect'd soon they rise,
And each his utmost courage tries.
They seize the Son of G O D , and bind,
Who stands all patient and resign'd ;
But in his worthy master's cause,
Peter his sword in silence draws,
And bold advancing, void of fear,
Cut off the High Priest's servant's ear.
The L O R D beholds, and with a frown,
Commands to lay the weapon down.
He heal'd the wound, his followers fled,
And to Jerusalem he's led.

HISTORY THE THIRTEENTH.

= *Arraignment, Condemnation, and Crucifixion
of Christ.*

Collected from the four Evangelists.

THE rabble that had seiz'd the L O R D ,
 With Judas, hateful and abhor'd !
 night to Annas * took their way ;
 They durst not seize him in the day.
 With priestly pride, the aged chief,
 Full of blind rage and unbelief !
 Proceeds the L O R D to interrogate :
 His doctrine asks him to relate,
 And his disciples. Christ declar'd
 His doctrine had by all been heard.
 > speak in private ne'er he sought,
 But boldly in the temple taught.—

C c 2

A surly

Annas was father-in-law to Caiaphas the high priest,
 had formerly officiated in that high character him-

A surly clown, that did not like
This answer, dar'd the LORD to strike.

To the high priest then Jesus came,
Whose savage heart was all on flame.
He for the priests and doctors sent,
Christ to condemn was their intent.—
A band of ruffians here they brought,
And long for some false witness sought;
But none could find. Then one declar'd,
That he had oft the prisoner heard.

And once he was observ'd to say,
The temple he'd in ruins lay,
And built it up e're the third day.
Then the high priest exalted stands,
And in GOD's awful name demands
The LORD to make it full express'd,
If really he is the Christ.

Jesus this truth would not deny,
But tells them all in his reply;

Hereaf

—**E**reafter they will see the day,
 —**T**hat will his awful form display,
 —**A**mongst the clouds, with terrors crown'd,
 —**T**o judge the trembling nations round.
 —**H**is costly robes the high priest tears,
 —**A**stonishment and horror stares.
 —**T**hen instant to the rest applies,
 —**Y**e hear his blasphemy, he cries ;
 —**A**ll farther quest we may give o'er,
 —**I**t is enough, we need no more !
 —**W**hat think you now ! they jointly cry,
 —**M**ost surely he deserves to die.

Peter with heavy anxious mind,
 Had follow'd on not far behind,
 And was by a disciple join'd ; }
 When from the mournful garden, they
 Took, with arm'd force, his **Lord** away,
 They in the house admittance gain,
 And stand amongst the impious train.

’Twas

158 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

'Twas night and cold, a fire they raise,

And all surround the beamy blaze.

A damsel, servant to the priest,

That listening stood amongst the rest;

Eager on Peter fix'd her eyes,

This man hath oft been seen, she cries,

With Jesus. Peter quick denies ;

At which the cock was heard to crow.

The apostle, full of bitter woe,

Still in the high priest's palace stay'd,

And instant, by another maid,

Was charg'd the same. But with an oath

Denying, he withstood them both.

Scarce pass'd the hour, when one drew near,

Friend to the man that lost his ear

By Peter's sword. On him he frown'd :

Did not I see thee give the wound,

When in the garden ? stern he cry'd.

But Peter still his **Lord** deny'd :

And said, the man he never knew.
The cock, while he protested, crew.
Cut to the heart, the saint appears,
Withdraws; and sheds vast floods of tears.

While darkness cover'd all the skies,
Their sentence pass'd, the assembly rise.
They to their sumptuous domes repair,
While in the surly soldiers care
The L O R D remain'd. Contempt and scorn
Now was by the Redeemer borne;
Reproach, derision, insult, sneers,
And all abuse from them he bears.

When morn brought on the guilty day,
The great Sanhedrim sat, and they
At early dawn the sentence give,
That Jesus must no longer live.
For long before they had decreed,
The holy Son of G O D to bleed.
But mighty Rome's imperial sway,
Judea's subject realms obey :

And

And their weak senators deplore,
The sword of Justice * their's no more.

To Pilate then the LORD they bring,
And say, he makes himself a king :
Opposes Cæsar's high command :
And raises tumults in the land.

'Twas paschal time, and all the Jews
That would the LORD of life accuse,
To enter Pilate's hall refuse,
Because, without pollution, they
Would share the feast. To what they say
Attention given, the Roman knight
Saw things in their own proper light.
Art thou a king ! to Christ he cry'd,
To this the Son of God reply'd :

The

* Judea, upon the disgrace of Archelaus, the son of Herod, which happened about twenty years before this time, being formed into a Roman province, the power of life and death no longer remained in the hands of the Jews.

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 201

The truth my bold accusers miss,

Not of this world my kingdom is.

Then Pilate to the Jews began,

I see no evil in this man !

The envious Jews then rage, and cry

He certainly deserves to die.

Their accusations vehement rise,

But Jesus not one word replies.

From distant Galilee to here,

They cry, his tumults still appear.

When Pilate heard of Galilee,

He cry'd, it not belongs to me,

Or to condemn, or to acquit ;

The cause to Herod * I submit.

Then to the king the L O R D they sent :

Who much rejoic'd at the event.—

VOL. IV.

D d

He

* Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee ; the same who put John the Baptist to death ; He was now at Jerusalem.

He long had ardently desir'd
To see the man so much admir'd ;
Who such great miracles had wrought.
And when the LORD to him was brought,
The courtiers long expecting stand
To see some wonder from his hand.
Collected in himself, the LORD
No work perform'd, or spoke a word
To what they ask'd him. They amaz'd,
And vex'd with disappointment gaz'd :
With bold derision round him press'd ;
Then in a robe of scarlet dress'd,
And, loaded with contempt and scorn,
They him to Pilate back return.
The king his thanks to Pilate sends,
And they from hence grow better friends.
Then to the Jews vex'd Pilate turn'd :
No crime, he cry'd, can be discern'd
In this just man, either by me,
Or by the king of Galilee.



But, as you seem to blame him so,
I'll scourge him, and then let him go.
The Jews more furious raise their cry,
And stand determin'd he shall die.
'Tis customary at the feast,
One malefactor be releas'd,
Pilate reply'd: and I'm inclin'd
That Jesus shall this mercy find.
No! crucify him! roar the Jews:
Barabbas is the man we choose.
Jesus shall die! if him you spare,
You no firm friend to Cæsar are.

Pilate perceiving it in vain
To strive their clamour to restrain,
Was heard for water now to call,
And wash'd his hands before them all.
Let all take notice that are here,
From this man's blood my hands are clear!
Loudly he cry'd: the guilt on you
Alone will fall! Then roar'd each Jew,

The guilt is ours! and let it be

On us and our posterity!

Then was high heaven's eternal heir
 Deliver'd to the soldiers care, *
 With orders that they should prepare
 For crucifixion. Scourges first
 Tore his soft flesh: then loudly burst
 Vast peals of laughter, while they dreſt
 Christ in a scarlet cloak and vest.
 They for his holy head decreed
 A crown of thorns; his hand a reed,
 Thus in mock majesty array'd,
 The jest of all the crowd he's made:
 Who, ere he to his death was led,
 Spit in his face, and beat his head.
 With heavenly mildness in his eyes,
 The L O R D submits, but not replies.



And ■

* St. Mark says, this was at the third hour, which was ■ nine o'clock in the morning. Christ was apprehended the ■ night before.

And every insult which he hears,
In meek resigned silence bears.

Excessive anguish seiz'd the heart
Of traitor Judas, for the part
Which he had acted. Jesus dies!
Iscariot, full of horror, flies
Back to the temple in amaze ;
And down the cursed silver lays.
Here, take it back ! he wildly said,
Innocent blood I have betray'd :
How great the guilt ! Vast horrors tear,
And agonies too great to bear
Swell his false heart : a cord supply'd
The odious means by which he dy'd.

Now Christ to Calvary takes his way :
A cross they on his shoulders lay.
The Saviour faints. A man they find,
To bear the weighty load behind.
Arriving at the mountain's crown,
And setting there the burden down ;

While

While for his foes he pray'd, there he
 Was nail'd to the accursed tree :
 And, wide extended on the wood,
 Shine the blue veins, and starts the blood.

That the great **LORD** of life might die }
 Amongst the worst of company,
 Two horrid thieves they crucify. }
 On either side their crosses stand,
 Full in his view, and near at hand.
 The crowd on high the Saviour views :
 And now approach the spiteful Jews ;
 Behold the Son of God ! they cry :
 What pity one so great should die !
 Due honours we prepare to give ;
 Come from the cross, and thou shalt live !
 The odious thieves on either side }
 Durst the great Prince of heaven deride : }
 But one of these, before he dy'd,
 Repents the wrong, and of the **LORD**
 Rich pardoning mercy he implor'd.

This

Engraved for Fellow's Hist. of the Bible.



Christ's Crucifixion.



This man might on a cross rejoice,
He goes from thence to Paradise.

Beneath the cross with heavy heart,
In all his sorrows bearing part,
Christ's mournful mother he beheld,
By bitter anguish there compell'd.
And, while her tears in rivers run,
She looks upon her suffering son.
The lov'd disciple too stood by :
To whom the LORD was heard to cry,
Behold thy mother ! To the fair,
With holy love and pious care,
Behold thy son ! Good John obey'd,
The motion which his Master made,'
With ready heart, without delay,
And took the mournful dame away.

Though rais'd on his meridian throne,
The day's bright king but faintly shone :
Involv'd in mists he takes his way,
And, gloomy, gives the guilty day.

When

When o'er his face thick darkness flies ;
And instant blots him from the skies.
Three horrid hours the night remain'd,
And wrapt in shades the guilty land.
The fourth sad hour the day restor'd,
When deadly anguish seiz'd the LORD :
My God ! my God ! he cries : Ah, why
Hast thou forsaken me ! One nigh
With vinegar a spunge supply'd ;
Christ tasted, bow'd his head, and dy'd.



THE
HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE.
BOOK X.

FROM THE
Death of CHRIST, to the Destruc-
tion of Jerusalem:

CONTAINING

The Transactions of about 40 Years.

VOL. IV.

E.



HISTORY THE FIRST.

The Resurrection and Ascension of Christ.

Collected from the Four Evangelists.

SOON as the LORD resign'd his breath,

And sunk into the arms of death,

The temple shook at the event,

And the rich vail in twain was rent;

A furious earthquake tore the ground,

And rock'd the trembling nation round.

The graves were open'd. Various dead

Arose, and o'er the city spread.

Before the evening clos'd the day,

The assembled Jews to Pilate pray

That no dead body may remain

The sabbath's holy rest to stain.

The Roman soldiers then drew nigh ;

And that the wretches soon might die,

Ec 2

They

They break their legs. The Lord was dead,
Yet with a spear his blood they shed :
His sacred side the javelin tore,
Whence gush'd forth water mix'd with gore.

Joseph, a Jew of wealth and fame,
Before sun-set to Pilate came,
And begg'd the body of the Lord ;
Whom he believ'd in, and ador'd.

Pilate consents. The pious chief
With decent care, and solemn grief,
In his own tomb the body laid.

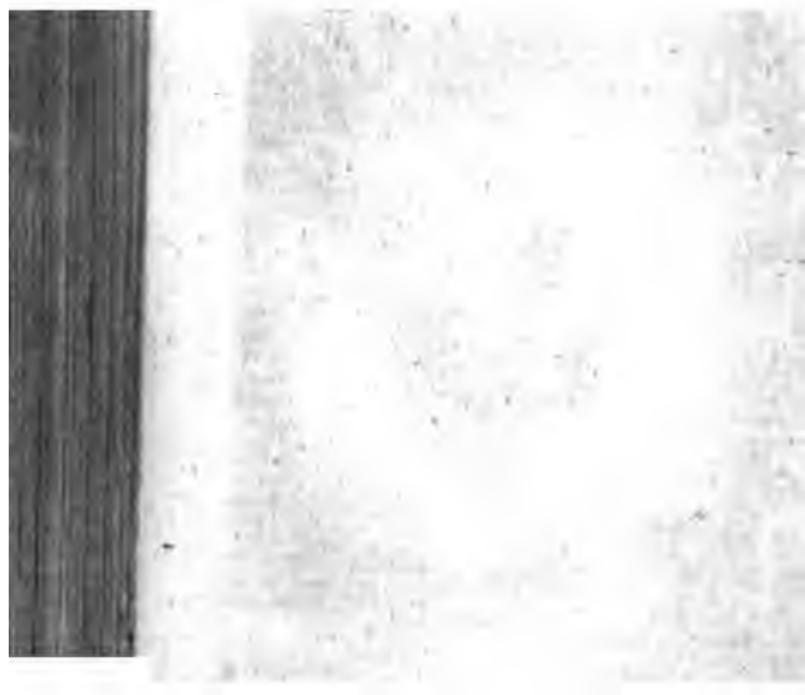
The tomb was in a garden made,
Hewn in the rock ; and with a stone
The door was clos'd. It was well known
Amongst the Jews, that Christ had said,
On the third day he from the dead
Should rise triumphant. For this cause,
Pilate a band of soldiers draws
To guard the tomb : and then they seal
The stone, that no deceit prevail.

The

Engrav'd for Fellow's Hist. of the Bible.



Christ's Resurrection.



The first night pass'd, and all was still.
The sabbath rest the Jews fulfil,
But ere the next bright morning rose,
A dreadful storm with fury blows :
And while the rocks an earthquake rends,
A mighty angel swift descends,
His eyes like lightning flash'd ; and white
His robes as purest beams of light.
Aghast, confounded, and amaz'd,
The shivering soldiers on him gaz'd ;
While from the tomb the stone he roll'd,
And sat upon it. They behold
The LORD in boundless glory rise :
And to the town, in terror flies
The wild astonish'd Roman guard.
When the chief priests these wonders heard,
They by a bribe the men persuade ;
Who (as the priests enjoin'd them) faid,
That while in sleep the soldiers lay,
Christ's body had been stol'n away

By

214 HISTO R Y of the B I B L I

By his disciples. To the tomb
At early dawn, the Mary's * come ;
With other pious matrons join'd,
All bringing spices. They design'd
To embalm the corps ; but found the sto
Was roll'd away ; the guard was gone.
The sacred dead they could not find.
But soon appear'd two men, that shin'd
In heavenly youth, and bright array'd :
Who to the mourning matrons said :
Daughters of Sion ! well we know
The mournful cause of all your woe :
In sad assemblage you appear,
To seek the man that is not here.
Jesus of Nazareth you admir'd ;
Who on the cross so late expir'd.
Not death's cold arms could him det
He's ris'n ; and now begins his reig

* Mary Magdalene, and Mary the moth

Tell his disciples. Peter tell,
He triumphs o'er the powers of hell !
At early dawn this morn he rose.
To Galilee he with you goes.
The pious matrons, much afraid,
Scarce knew what the bright angels said ;
And from the tomb they trembling fled. }
To the apostles Mary went :
From her they learn the strange event
Known at the tomb. Surpris'd they hear
That Christ's dead body is not there.
Good Peter runs, with anxious mind,
And John the hasty journey join'd.
Peter beheld with wondering eye,
The linen clothes and napkin lie,
But saw no more. Mary returns,
For still her heart with anguish burns,
And in the grave appear'd in sight
Two shining angels, rob'd in white.

Why

216 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Why weepest thou! soft was their word,

Mary replies; I've lost my LORD!

Jesus stood by; her words he heard:

But like the gardener appear'd.

Mary with anguish him survey'd.

O tell me where my LORD is laid!

As thus she spake, with weeping eyes,

In his own form the LORD replies,

Mary! The pleasing voice she knew,

And at his feet herself she threw.

But e'er she kiss'd them, Christ rejoins,

While all his form with glory shines,

To touch me, Mary, is not well:

But go; and my dear Brethren tell,

That I ascend to the abode

Of my great Father, and my God;

Nor only mine, but yours. With joy

Mary's swift feet to Salem fly:

Where the sad train in silence wait:

Who hear the joyful fair relate,

That she had seen the LOR^D. That day,

The other women on the way

From the cold grave, like favour found ;

And spread the wonderous tidings round.

But all the apostolic train

Thought it some whimsies of the brain ;

It not appearing clearly then.

That Christ must die, and rise again.

Before cool evening clos'd the day,

As two disciples took their way

To fair Emmaus : on the road

Appear'd to them the Son of GOD.

He like a traveller appear'd ;

And join'd in the discourse he heard.

The crucifixion was the theme ;

Sad was the event, and strange to them :

For such great works from Christ were seen ,

They thought he had MESSIAH been.

And stranger still, that day they heard

He to their women had appear'd.

218 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

To this the stranger soon replies ;
That from the ancient prophecies
It must appear to every eye,
That great MESSIAH was to die.
Arriving at their journey's end,
With them the L ORD will condescend
To take refreshment. When at meat,
He bleſſ'd the bread, and gave to eat.
In his own form the L ORD they view ;
Who instant from their sight withdrew.
Then while their hearts within them burn,
They to Jerusalem return.
A glad assembly there they find :
Who in their joy and wonder join'd.
And from their brethren now they heard,
That Christ to Peter had appear'd.

While these events fresh wonder claim,
Jesus himself amongst them came ;
The doors being shut. With shivering fear
At first they see the L ORD appear ;

Bu

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 219

But he, with looks of tenderest love,
Proceeds their scruples to remove;
Bids them behold his hands and feet:
And asks them what they have to eat,
While this they see the LORD receive,
With joy and wonder they believe.

When thus the Saviour deign'd to appear,
The apostle Thomas was not there,
I'll not believe, unless, said he,
His wounded hands and feet I see;
And thrust my hand into his side.
Nor was the bold demand deny'd,
For eight days after, to the train,
The Prince of Peace appear'd again,
To Thomas then the LORD applies,
And every doubt he satisfies.
My LORD! my GOD! the good man cries.

Next by the sounding sea-beat shore,
Where the wild winds and billows roar,

220 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

The L ORD appear'd. The apostle train
All the long night had toil'd in vain.
No fish were taken. Morning rose ;
Himself the great Redeemer shews
On the sea-side. The net they throw
By his direction ; and soon know
From their success, it is the L ORD,
Whom they with love and joy ador'd.

Upon a lofty mountain's crown
In Galilee, the L ORD came down.
A large assembly * saw him there,
And worship with religious fear.
To Salem then, with boundless joys
The apostles and disciples rise.
And as the twelve of food partake,
Jesus appear'd : and thus he spake :
No longer, brethren, in your mind
Let unbelief reception find :
Nor yet esteem it strange, that I
Was left to suffer and to die.

* It is supposed, that it was at this time that the
appeared to five hundred disciples at once.

But know, 'twas fix'd in heaven's decree,

That all these wonderous things should be.

View scripture in its proper light,

And you'll perceive that all was right.

These great events you must proclaim ;

And through the nations bear my name.

To all the world my gospel give ;

And whosoe'er believes shall live.

But who rejects the heavenly news,

Him wrath, and double death pursues.

The men that shall receive the same,

Baptize them in the triple name

Of God. Then teach them to obey,

And follow where I lead the way.

Be not of wicked men afraid ;

But go, depending on my aid.

Each shall, where'er his course proceeds,

Work by my name immortal deeds.

Hell's king shall tremble on his throne ;

And earth's wide empire be my own.

222 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

In the great work with gladness join,
For all the heavens and earth are mine,
Yet to the task forbear to rise
Till aid be sent you from the skies.
Here tarry till that aid I send,
Or you my presence shall attend,
Till his long course old time shall end.

Thus having spoke, without delay,
To Bethany they take their way.
And the Redeemer, ere he rose,
His blessing on them all bestows.
Ascending then in open view,
Their eager eyes their LORD pursue,
Till hid behind a cloud. Two men
In shining robes appearing then:
Ye men of Galilee! each cries,
Why stand ye gazing at the skies!
Jesus, your master and your friend;
Whom you this moment saw ascend,

To

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 223

To judge the world shall thus come down.

Let sinners tremble at his frown.

HISTORY THE SECOND.

*The Descent of the Holy Ghost, and the first
Preaching of the Apostles.*

*Act*s, ch. ii.

WHEN thus the L^OR^D was seen to rise,
Triumphant to his native skies,
Back to Jerusalem return
The apostles, and no longer mourn,
But in a joint assembly pray'd,
Expecting what the L^OR^D had said.
When soon amongst them Peter rose,
And an apostle then they chose,
By his advice, in Judas' room;
And waited till the Spirit come.
In expectation, full ten days,
At Zion the assembly stays.

When

224 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

When, rushing like a mighty wind,
An heart-inflaming power they find.
And cloven tongues, like fiery flame,
O'er all their heads directly came.
Now great ideas fill each soul,
And floods of joy upon them roll ;
Light, love, and truth all glorious rise.
The work of God before them lies :
And every spirit overflows
With ardor, more than nature knows.
The joyful train, without delay,
Begin the busines of the day :
The glorious gospel now proclaim,
And boldly preach in Jesus' name.
Not to their native tongue confin'd,
But instant, on their opening mind,
All learning rose. And in their turn
The heavenly truth all strangers learn
In their own tongue, correct and free,
Whate'er their land, or language be.

The

The city stood amaz'd to see
The simple swains of Galilee,
(Where her proud head no science rear'd)
In every learned language heard.
Vast crowds about the apostles press'd,
And some made all these things their jest.
Peter, conspicuous in the throng,
Spake boldly in his native tongue:
Address'd his countrymen the Jews,
And with such evidence pursues
His noble theme, their guilt they see;
And from denounced vengeance flee.
Three thousand then the train baptize,
And great and lasting were their joys.

HISTORY THE THIRD.

The lame Man restored in the Temple: And the Apostles twice imprisoned, and released.

Actis, ch.iii. iv. v.

NOW at the appointed hour of prayer,
 Peter and John with joy repair }
 To join the temple worship. There }
 An helpless cripple begging lies. }
 On him good Peter fix'd his eyes. }
 The cripple begs: The saint replies,
 Silver and gold I've none to give:
 Such as I have thou shalt receive.
 Jesus of Nazareth, is a name
 Which we to all the world proclaim.
 And in this mighty name, I say,
 Rise on thy feet, and go thy way.
 Immediate rising at the word,
 He walk'd, and leap'd, and prais'd the Lord:

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 227

And then into the temple went,
Rejoicing in the great event.
The crowd this deed with wonder view ;
The helpless cripple well they knew :
And to the sacred porch they ran,
Where stood the apostles and the man.
Then Peter, in his Master's cause,
The whole attention quickly draws :
And shews, that by his mighty name
The man was found, who late was lame.
The priests and rulers heard the news ;
And full of malice came the Jews.
The prison must the saints contain.
But Peter had not preach'd in vain ;
Five thousand souls receiv'd the word,
With joy believ'd, and own'd the LOR.D.
Before the counsel stood next day
The two apostles. Boldly they

G g 2

Declare

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Declare from Jesus' mighty name
The wonderous power of healing came : }
And him the Saviour they proclaim. }
The priests and doctors of the law
These two plain men with wonder saw,
And recollect'd they had been
With the Redeemer often seen.
The miracle, so lately wrought,
Was worthy of regard, they thought :
And that it might no further spread,
'Twas best, the whole assembly said,
Lest all the wondering town should know,
To threaten them, and let them go.
Before them the apostles stand,
And fearless hear the stern command
Which from the great sanhedrim came,
To preach no more in Jesus' name.
Being thus dismiss'd, with ardent mind
They soon their own companions join'd :

To

To heaven their prayers and praises rise :
And thence receiving fresh supplies,
While with vast joy their spirits flame,
The glorious gospel they proclaim.

Then to the temple boldly goes
The apostle train, and wonders shews :
The astonish'd nation crowds around ;
The sick and the diseased found
Immediate cures. The devils roar,
And dare attempt their prey no more.
With vengeful spirits all on flame,
Then the high priest and rulers came :
And, their proceedings to prevent,
The apostles are to prison sent.
Not long in durance they remain ;
But in the temple stand again,
By heavenly power releas'd. Next day
The Jews a counsel call'd ; and they
Send for the prisoners. In amaze
The whole assembled counsel gaze.

The

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The prison fast was shut ; they hear,
When open'd, not a soul was there.
While these events their wonder claim,
A person from the temple came :
The men ye yesterday detain'd,
Now in the temple preaching stand,
In haste he cry'd. The counsel send,
And civil ask them to attend :
For they a tumult fear'd. They came.
Did not we charge you in this name
No more to preach ? the high priest cries :
But through the town your doctrine flies ;
And sain would bring upon our head
Your Master's blood, so lately shed.
To this the apostles jointly say,
That God's commands they must obey ;
And would to latest time maintain,
That Jesus was unjustly slain.
The elders foam with rage, and cry,
The prisoners all deserve to die.

Their

r furious spirits to compose,
er'd by all, Gamaliel rose,
learning and with wisdom crown'd,
for his counsels high renown'd:
apostles taken from the bar,
his advice the elders hear:
men of Israel! I advise
to be wary, and be wise:
let your wisdom now be shewn,
itting all these men alone.
ll imposture and deceit
e to sink with its own weight.
ed Theudas, where is he!
Judas bold of Galilee!
one of these shall Jesus be,
deceiver. But if true,
ause will ne'er be crush'd by you.
in man's pride with folly joins
ush JEHOVAH's great designs.

Thought

232 HISTORY of the BIBLE.

Though all the powers on earth unite,
In vain with Israel's God they fight.
Vast shouts of honour and applause
The speech of great Gamaliel draws.
The prosecution they give-o'er,
And charge the men to preach no more:
Then let them go. The apostles came,
Rejoicing that they suffer shame
For Jesus' sake. Nor fear'd they ought,
But daily in the temple taught.

HISTORY THE FOURTH.

Ananias and Sapphira.

Acts, ch. v.

THOSE who believ'd in Jesus' name,
Felt heavenly love so brightly flame,
That full of peace, and growing joys,
All worldly riches they despise.

Nor

Nor was there one amongst the train,
That need of poverty complain :
For those who earthly good posses'd,
Distributed amongst the rest.

Whoe'er did large possessions hold,
With open heart their land they sold :
Great were the sums which hence arise,
And in the apostles power it lies,
Amongst the brethren to divide,
That all the poor might be supply'd.

One Ananias sold his land,
And gave into the apostles hand
Part of the price : But part would save,
Pretending that the whole he gave.

To Peter this deceit was known :
The man his wickedness was shewn :
And told, it was to God he ly'd :
When instant he fell down, and dy'd.
His wife was absent. When she came,
She still persisted in the same ;

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Her husband's death unknown. She dies;
And joins in death, who join'd in lies,
Her guilty lord. The rumour spread,
And fill'd the saints with holy dread.

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HISTORY THE FIFTH.

The Death of Stephen.

Act^s, ch. vi. vii.

BUT when the church grew wide and large,
The apostles with the weighty charge
Were weary'd: and seven deacons chose,
And in his province each bestows.
Stephen amongst the seven was known,
And every virtue was his own:
Full of the Spirit, faith, and love,
His noble conduct all approve:
His honest heart was all on flame,
He wonders wrought in Jesus' name:

Dispute

Disputed with the gospel's foes,
And oft confounds whoe'er oppose.
This rouz'd the vengeance of the train,
Who had withstood the truth in vain.
False witness they procure ; and he
By them is charg'd with blasphemy.
Before the council soon he stands ;
And haughty the high priest demands
To know the truth. Stephen replies,
With heavenly brightness in his eyes,
And like an angel spake. To trace
The conduct of the chosen race,
At faithful Abraham he begins,
And gives a list of Israel's sins :
Their wickedness he will maintain,
And shews they have the prophets slain ;
And, to augment the horrid guilt
Of all the blood their fathers spilt,
The Son of God, with horrid pride
The present Jews had crucify'd.

This just reproof with wrath they hear,
 Some gnash their teeth, and others sneer,
 When looking up, the good man cries :
 I see my Saviour in the skies !
 He lives ! he reigns ! Each Jew appears
 To foam with rage. They stop their ears :
 Upon him run with one accord ;
 And, while he call'd upon the LORD
 Not to avenge his guiltless death,
 They with huge stones beat out his breath.

HISTORY THE SIXTH.

*Philip preaches at Samaria, and converts the
 Ethiopian eunuch.*

Acts, ch. viii.

NOW Philip to Samaria goes,
 And gospel truth sublimely flows,
 Warm from his heart, the country round,
 And with success his words were crown'd.

From

From Ethiopia's sun-burnt soil,
Where through vast regions runs the Nile,
An eunuch chief, of wealth and fame,
To worship in the temple came.
Returning joyful home, the sage
Perus'd the deep prophetic page:
Of Jesus read, as on he went,
But doubted whom the prophet meant.
Philip approach'd, by heaven's command,
And gave the chief to understand,
That at Jerusalem had been
The great MESSIAH lately seen;
Whom the old prophets all proclaim:
Jesus of Nazareth was his name:
The Son of God, the heir of heaven,
Who was for man's salvation given.
The eunuch prince with joy receiv'd
The heavenly word; in Christ believ'd:
Was then baptiz'd without delay,
And went rejoicing on his way.

HISTORY THE SEVENTH.

*The Gospel preached to the Gentiles.**Acts, ch. x. xi.*

AT fair Cesarea dwelt in fame
 A man that own'd the Roman name,
 Cornelius call'd : whom nature's laws
 Had led to the Supreme First Cause :
 To the true God he daily pray'd,
 And liv'd depending on his aid.
 One evening flash'd before his sight
 A glorious blaze of heavenly light ;
 An angel form he saw appear,
 Who told him, if the truth he'd hear,
 To send to Joppa's sea-beat shore,
 And there good Peter's aid implore :
 At the sea-side the saint remain'd ;
 Simon, a tanner, own'd the land.

With

With joyful heart Cornelius sent ;
And anxious waits the great event.

When near the town the servants draw,
Peter a wonderous vision saw ;
Which gave the saint to understand,
That he must go at God's command ;
And the rich gospel's truths explain
To men the Jews might think unclean.
The men arrive ; their busines shew ;
Peter resolves with them to go.

And at Cornelius, house attends
A band of relatives and friends.

Peter with plainness preach'd the Lord ;
They all receiv'd the heavenly word :
For while they hear the joyful sound,
The Holy Spirit's power they found
Warm every heart. To God they raise
Immortal songs of love and praise.

As Peter will not God withstand,
He all baptizes out of hand.

Earneſt

Earnest request to him they made,
And some few days he with them stay'd.

At Salem the apostles learn'd,
Peter had to the Gentiles turn'd,
And preach'd the gospel. Him they blame :
Then to defend himself he came.
And when the case was clearly known,
The mighty power of God they own :
To him with joy their songs they raise :
How wise and good are all his ways!

HISTORY THE EIGHTH.

*The Persecution of the Church by the Jewish Priests
and Elders, and by Herod Agrippa.*

Acts, ch. xii.

WHEN holy Stephen was no more,
The Jews, with growing rancour, roar
Against the truth. The elders join'd
With Saul of Tarsus, one whose mind

Was

Was full of envy, active, shrewd,
The Christians he with rage pursu'd:
The name of Jesus he disdain'd,
And chas'd his followers from the land.
These, forc'd to leave their native home,
Abroad in distant nations roam,
And preach the gospel where they come.



But Herod, * grown a mighty king
By Roman power, seeking to bring
Himself in favour with the Jews,
The Christian name with rage pursues.
James, the apostle of the Lord,
Who lov'd his name, and preach'd his word,
He put to death. The Jews he pleas'd;
And to oblige them Peter seiz'd.
In prison he the good man cast,
Designing, when the feast † was past,

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I i

To

* Herod Agrippa, grandson to Herod the Great; who having obtained the favour of the Emperor Claudius, he gave him the kingdoms of Judea and Chacis.

† The passover.

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To bring him forth, and let him die,
Peter in favour stood so high
Amongst the Christians, that his name
Vast multitudes with joy proclaim : . . .
Immortal deeds his honour spread,
Who rais'd Tabitha from the dead : :
And, while he in the prison lay,
The church presented, night and day,
Before the LORD her fervent prayer,
That GOD would his apostle spare.

Now night in darkness held her throne : :
The tyrant's base design was known.
Between two soldiers Peter lay ;
Senteno'd to death the following day..
But from the skies an angel falls,
And shines within the prison walls : :
With his soft touch the saint awoke ;
He smil'd around, and thus he spoke : :
Peter, arise ! he hears the call,
And from his limbs the fetters fall.

Put on thy cloaths, and follow me !
 The saint obeys ; but scarcely he
 Knew what he did, or where he goes ;
 The whole so like a vision shews.
 The double guard unseen they past ;
 The iron gate, strong, heavy, vast,
 Untouch'd flies open. Instant they
 Thro' the dark street pursu'd their way,
 While the whole town in silence lay. }
 The angel now no longer stays :
 The apostle stands in glad amaze ;
 But recollected, will appear
 At Mary's house. The brethren there,
 All night assembled, seek the skies :
 Near to each heart good Peter lies.
 The apostle knocks : his voice they hear :
 To let him in at first they fear ;
 At length take courage. He declares,
 That God, in answer to their prayers,

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Hath by his angel set him free.

Astonish'd they the good man see;

While joy in every bosom flows,

Good Peter out of danger goes.

When morning shone, the waking guard
In vast amazement wildly star'd.

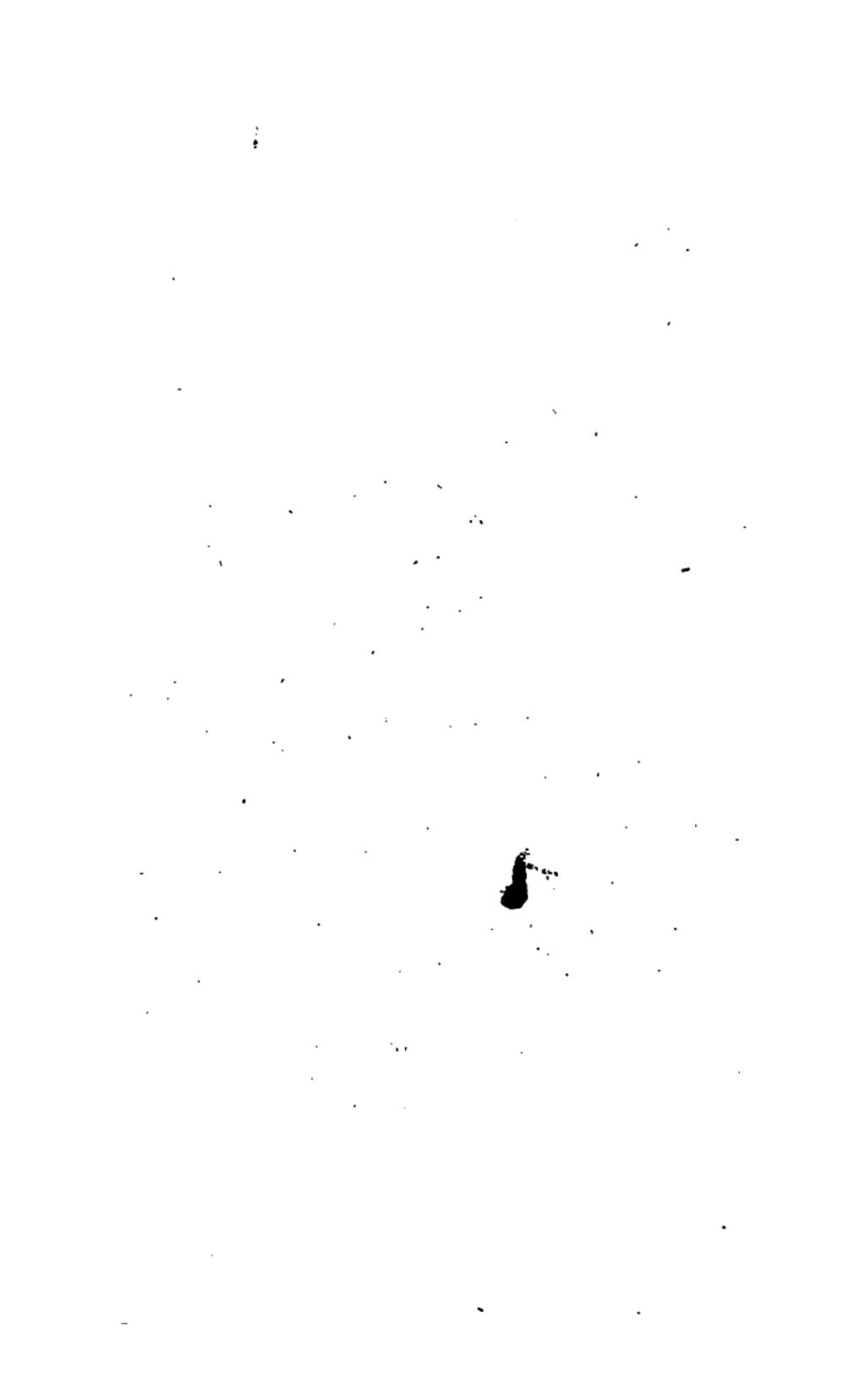
The prisoner lost, they could not guess
The means by which he 'scap'd. No less
The gloomy tyrant rag'd, to find

The man set free, whom he assign'd
To instant death. The country round
Was search'd, but Peter was not found.

Then from the throne the orders fly,
Which doom the guiltless guard to die.

To fair Cesarea quickly then
The king remov'd his court. The men
Of Tyre and Sidon to him send,
And make his chamberlain their friend,
To sue for peace. When on his throne,
In royal robes, the monarch shone:

An



Engraved for Fellow's Hist. of the Bible.



The Conversion of Saul.

And in so eloquent a strain
From thence address'd the listening train ;
Before his seat they prostrate lie ;
It is the voice of God ! they cry.
The haughty king accepts the praise :
But heavenly vengeance, rising, lays
The boaster low. And for his pride,
Smitten with dire disease, he dy'd.

HISTORY THE NINTH.

The Conversion of the great Apostle Paul. His extensive Labours and uncommon Sufferings, And the Spreading of the Gospel through various Kingdoms by his Ministry, and that of the other Apostles.

Act. ch. ix. & xiii. to the End.

WHEN Stephen to his death was led,
And in the cause of Jesus bled ;
A young man, who from Tarsus came,
Strove to blow up the raging flame
Of persecution, Saul his name,

A pupil

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A pupil of Gamaliel. He,
Full of blind fury, would not see
His master's moderation right :
But strove incessant day and night,
Christ's church, just rising, to confound ;
And shake the fabric to the ground.
Whoe'er believ'd in Jesus' name,
The subject of his hate became :
And more than all the cruel Jews,
He them with ceaseless rage pursues.
Nor in Jerusalēm alone,
His rage against the church was shewn.
To distant realms his fury flies :
And who believes in Jesus dies.
From the high-priest commission gain'd,
He goes, with hatred unrestrain'd,
To fair Damascus, high in fame,
And blood and slaughter were his aim.
The city scarce appear'd in sight,
Before a sudden blaze of light,

● By

HISTORY of the BIBLE. 243

By far more powerful than the sun,
Around the impious party shone.
The beamy blaze surpriz'd them all,
And prostrate to the ground they fall..
Then to the chief the Saviour spake,
Reveal'd himself: and bid him make
Now for Damascus, and remain
Till he should further knowledge gain
Of heaven's high will. This Saul obeys.
But by the bright surrounding blaze,
Had lost his sight.. Three days he lay.
O'erwhelm'd with terror and dismay..
Now plainly saw his former guilt :
And trembled at the blood he spilt..
Till God, propitious to his prayers,
Sends to relieve his anxious cares..
Good Ananias: and his sight
He now receives. Vast floods of light;
And joy and glory on him roll ;
Dispel the darkness of his soul ;

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And make him forward to proclaim
Salvation thro' a Saviour's name.

Now, with surpassing zeal and care,
And vigilance, he would not spare
Thro' various distant lands to bear
The glorious gospel's joyful sound:
And man's weak reasonings to confound.

First at Damascus he was heard,
Arabia heavenly truth reveal'd
Warm from his heart. And then appear'd
At Salem's guilty towers, the chief,
Who late had fill'd the church with grief.
Him with surprize the apostles view,
Nor can they think his heart is true.
But he reveals the heavenly call,
And in the work exceeds them all.

By heaven's direction being join'd
By Barnabas: with ardent mind,
The brother saints the gospel give,
And various nations hear and live.

Oppos'd

Oppos'd on Cyprus' verdant shore,

Bar-Jesus saw the light no more.

A man, who had been always lame,

Full in their view at Lystra came.

He walks, when Paul had bid him rise.

The gods are come ! the city cries,

The priests prepare the sacrifice.

But soon on different views procced,

And doom the holy men to bleed.

Great Paul' being ston'd, he dead appears,

The Christians shed vast floods of tears ;

And crowd around him. He arose,

And the next day to Derbc goes.

At Antioch various Christian Jews,

The Gentile converts much accuse,

Since circumcision they refuse.

Then to Jerusalem * they go,

The Apostles' will, in this, to know.

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K k

And

* Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem on this occasion, and brought the determination back to Antioch.

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And by the assembly 'twas decreed,

That of this rite there was no need.

Now with great Paul good Silas goes,

And Philippi the gospel knows.

A damsel, whom a fiend posses'd,

Had much her master's wealth increas'd,

By divination. Paul's command-

The power infernal can't withstand.

The dæmon flees. She leaves the trade,

The master then an uproar made.

The saints in prison are detain'd.

At night an earthquake shakes the land.

The fetters burst, and open fly

The prison doors. The goalers cry ;

The good men heard, and pacify

The raging chief : who thence believes,

And soon baptismal rites receives.

When, by the magistrates command,

Good Paul and Silas leave the land.

The

The holy men depart in peace,
And carry on the work thro' Greece.
At length great Paul to Athens * came,
Renown'd for learning's mighty name
All o'er the world ; and gospel brought
To where great Plato late had taught.
The unity of heaven's Supreme,
And the Redeemer's mighty name,
The apostle boldly would maintain,
Amongst the philosophic train.

To Corinth then good Paul proceeds,
But from the Jews dissention breeds.
To Gallio they the saints accuse,
But he to hear them will refuse :
Determin'd, he the Christians spares,
And for the tumult nothing cares.

At

* The best account of these parts, as well as the world in general, may be seen in Mr. Moore's Collection of Voyages and Travels, now publishing in weekly numbers, adorned with fine copper-plates, and comprehending all the late discoveries in the South Seas.

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At Ephesus then Paul appear'd,
Where stood Diana's temple, rear'd
On mighty columns. Jesus' name
The great apostle would proclaim.
The priests and craftsmen, much afraid,
That they from hence should lose their trade,
Incense the townsmen ; soon they rise,
And shout Diana to the skies.

Now to Jerusalem assign'd,
The pious chief with ardent mind,
Goes thro' the churches : takes his leave,
And deigns his last advice to give.
When to the guilty town he came,
The wicked Jews were all on flame.
Soon was he from the temple torn,
And, by their fury overborne,
Had been destroy'd: but was that hour
Protected by the Roman Power.
The Jews, with unabating rage,
In joint conspiracy engage

To give him death. This to prevent,
 To fair Cesarea he is sent;
 But the high priest and Jews appear,
 And furiously accuse him there.
 Paul before Felix pleads his cause,
 And makes him tremble. Then the Jews, }
 To Portius Festus, Paul accuse; }
 When to Jerusalem he came:
 And sudden vengeance was their aim.
 Send for him here, they jointly say,
 (Thinking to kill him on the way) }
 The chief declares, that Paul shall stay.
 Soon to Cesarea Festus came,
 And there the Jews with vengeful aim
 Accuse the saint. To 'scape their hands,
 Of Cæsar audience he demands.
 Agrippa * to Cesarea came,
 Appriz'd of the apostle's fame,

He

* King Agrippa was son to Herod Agrippa, who put the
 apostle James to death.

He asks to hear him. Then his cause
The great apostle pleads ; and draws
Such favour from the affected throne,
The listening king himself must own
Almost a Christian. Soon to Rome
They see the lov'd apostle come,
O'er wintry seas. And in the way
Shipwreck'd on Malta's isle he lay.
Two years at Rome he spread around
The glorious gospel's joyful sound :
These powerful truths he would maintain
In horrid Nero's bloody reign ;
Till by the tyrant's rage and pride, *
The great apostle nobly dy'd.

In the mean time the Christian name
To earth's remotest regions came.
The apostles bore the joyful sound
With zeal the rugged globe around :
The world with heavenly truth supply'd,
And in their Master's cause they dy'd.

* Most of St. Paul's epistles were written from Rome.

HISTORY THE TENTH.

*The Banishment of the Apostle John to the Island
of Patmos, where he receives his Revelation.*

Rev. ch. i.

WHEN fierce Domitian held the sway,
And Rome's great men his laws obey,
Against the Christian cause and name
His edict full of fury came ;
And by his cruel rage and pride
Vast numbers of the Christians dy'd.
By his command, in banishment
The lov'd apostle John was sent
To Patmos' isle. Favour'd by heaven,
To him, in vision, here was given
A view of things to come. He knows
The end of all the church's foes ;
Sees Antichrist both rise and fall,
And fire and darkness swallow all :

While

While angels through the skies proclaim
The glorious victories of the Lamb.

Before this great apostle dy'd,
The wicked city was destroy'd,
Where Jesus Christ was crucify'd.

By pride and stubbornness impell'd,
Against the Romans they rebell'd :
Then valiant Titus took the field.

The faithless city would not yicld,
Till drench'd in slaughter, blood, and fire,
By myriads her false sons expire :

The temple burns ; and on her walls
The just denounced vengeance falls :
Her streams run blood ; and all behold
The miseries which the LORD foretold.

And she (now vile in heathen eyes)
An awful heap of ruins lies :
While her false sons, by vengeance hurl'd,
Like chaff are scatter'd o'er the world.

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